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# PIONEERS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN AMERICA

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Being the Great and Thursday
Lectures delivered in Boston
in nineteen hundred and three

BOSTON
AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION
1903

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TO

JANE NORTON GREW

AND

HENRIETTA GODDARD FITZ

WHO MADE THESE LECTURES

POSSIBLE

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# PREFACE.

Two hundred and seventy-two years ago, John Cotton, minister of the First Church in Boston, with the co-operation of his ministerial associates, established what soon came to be known as the "Great and Thursday Lecture." This weekly lecture was in colonial times the chief social and religious event in Boston. In 1775 it was discontinued; but at the conclusion of the siege of Boston it was revived, and has since had a continuous existence. It has been the occasion for the discussion of public affairs as well as matters of theological interest. It is probably a unique institution in American life.

With the aid of two helpful friends, the American Unitarian Association has been able to unite with the minister and Standing Committee of the First Church to carry forward on this ancient foundation a course of lectures upon Religious Liberty in America. These lectures have attracted so much public interest that they are now published by the Association for larger circulation.

Samuel A. Eliot.

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# I

## William Brewster and the Independents

# WILLIAM BREWSTER AND THE INDEPENDENTS.

PURITANISM is one of the cardinal words in the history of the English race. The Puritan movement was the new birth of England. It was the religious and political equivalent of the brilliant flowering of English genius in the Elizabethan age. It should have been contemporary with that; but it was held back for a generation by royal and ecclesiastical tyranny, only to come with the greater energy when it did come. The new birth of England, it was the birth of New England. The same great movement planted New England and created the English Commonwealth. The leaders there and here were actuated by the same motives and working for the same great ends. One and the same spirit was in Sir John Eliot, Hampden, Pym, Cromwell, Milton, and Vane, and in Bradford, Brewster, Winthrop, Cotton, Hooker, and Roger Williams. It was largely accident which determined who should stay there and who should come here. "New England," says Maurice, "was a translation into prose of the dreams which haunted Milton his whole life long." Massachusetts was a refuge, provided in

the storm and stress, to which thousands more of Puritans would have come, had their struggle in England fared worse than it did. The influence of Puritanism upon the English race and upon the politics of the world was permanent and profound. "The whole history of English progress since the Restoration, on its moral and spiritual sides," says Green in his "History of the English People," "has been the history of Puritanism"; and Borgeaud, writing in Calvin's city, describes the Puritan movement under the title of "The Rise of Modern Democracy in Old and New England." The American republic is the child of the English Commonwealth. Samuel Adams, Franklin, Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Emerson stand in the apostolic succession to the heroic Puritan group of the seventeenth century. In Puritanism constitutions, as we understand the term, written constitutions, had their birth. The Compact on the "Mayflower," the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut, the Agreement of the People, the Instrument of Government, and Vane's "Healing Question" were the progenitors of the Constitution of the United States; and it is this last, and not the institutions of the mother country, which has prescribed political forms and methods to every English colony during the last century. And,

as Puritan politics has determined the political usages of the English race from Cromwell's time to ours, so Puritan religion has shaped its churches. The vast majority of religious men of English race to-day belong to churches which had their genesis or inspiration in the Puritan movement.

The pioneers of religious liberty in America have all been Puritans. The Puritan has been a pioneer from the beginning. Puritanism has meant movement, has meant liberty, has meant the demand for more light. Its logical polity in the Church was Independency; and identified with Independency in some way or other have been all the eleven pioneers of religious liberty chosen for treatment in the present course of lectures. It will be said that Jefferson's antecedents were not these; but what Jefferson himself admired in religion was the simple congregationalism of the Baptists, and in politics the New England town meeting. It will be said that Phillips Brooks was a bishop. But Phillips Brooks was baptized in the First Church of Boston; the blood of John Cotton was in his veins; he lost no opportunity to slight the doctrine of apostolic succession; and his theology, as his successor has well said, was simply the theology of Horace Bushnell. In truth, I believe that the radical pioneer

of religious thought and religious liberty can now rise only in Independency, or there only find his place; for in the nature of the case the supreme authority in every other polity must at some point or other say, "Thus far and no farther."

The greatest pioneer of religious liberty in America is not included in the present program. He was never in New England in the flesh. But the religious fathers of New England cared little for the flesh; and, in spirit, John Calvin was the greatest force in the Puritanism of New England and of Old England for three centuries. He is a force never to be forgotten, but always to be revered, by the sons of our fathers. I am glad to see men and magazines speaking to-day of the "Renaissance of Calvinism." We need such a renaissance. There are things in Calvin and Calvinism which we do not want to see have new birth, and which will not have it; but America and England certainly need to-day that commanding consciousness of the sovereignty of God which made Puritan religion and Puritan politics potent and sublime. We need to know that any sovereignty which is not rooted in the divine sovereignty, or is not in harmony with that, cannot and ought not long endure. We need to understand more deeply the relation of that conception to all true liberty, equality, and fraternity.

We need to understand more truly than most do why it was that wherever Calvinism went three hundred years ago — to Holland to fight under William the Silent against the Spanish power, to Scotland with John Knox, to the English Cambridge with Thomas Cartwright, or into this American wilderness with William Brewster and Thomas Hooker — there went inevitably the seeds of democracy and of the commonwealth. It was with Calvin's name upon its lips that Puritanism was born. In that same conference at Hampton Court, in 1550, in which John Hooper, "the first Puritan," declared that "the usage of generations is not sufficient warrant in religious matters," he appealed also to "Master Calvin's way" as the way which it behooved England to follow in her own reformation.

William Brewster was born four years before Calvin died. That was a noteworthy year, 1564, in which John Calvin died and William Shakespeare was born; in which Michel Angelo died and Galileo was born,— Galileo, whose life, ending in 1642, almost exactly covers Brewster's, which ended in 1644. When Brewster was born in 1560, Calvinism was pouring into England with a power which promised to Calvinize speedily the whole English Church,— which would have done it but for royal intervention.

Elizabeth had come to the throne two years before; and the hundreds of English refugees who, during Mary's reign, had been gathered in little congregations in Switzerland and along the Rhine, under Calvin's controlling influence, were coming home to spread that influence over England. How great the sum total of religious leadership in those little congregations appears sufficiently from the fact that more than half of Elizabeth's bishops were taken from their number.

It was in East England that Puritanism especially had its home, and above all places in the University of Cambridge; for the Puritan movement at the first was emphatically a scholars' movement. How deep New England's roots are in the English Cambridge appears when we bethink us of the history of the fathers of Plymouth, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. Brewster and Robinson, Winthrop and the Massachusetts clergy, Roger Williams, and Thomas Hooker,—all these were Cambridge men. It may have been within the very walls of the university that the agreement was signed which founded the Massachusetts enterprise. The half-dozen martyrs of Congregationalism suffered, three in London, the other three in Norfolk and Suffolk. Scattered about the east-

ern counties are the towns and parishes — St. Edmundsbury; Norwich; Groton; Little Baddow, where Thomas Hooker and John Eliot taught their school together; Oates, where Roger Williams dreamed of toleration in the very spot afterwards the home of John Locke who made it law — which are the Meccas of the New Englander in England.

Where William Brewster was born we do not know. He succeeded his father as post of Scrooby in 1589; but how long the father had been at Scrooby, or whence he came, we do not know. This we know: that the Brewster family belonged to the eastern counties, with branches in Suffolk and in Essex. In due time William Brewster came to the university at Cambridge; and here it was that he was "first seasoned with the seeds of grace and virtue." It must have been about 1580 that he came to Cambridge; and this was when Robert Browne was just beginning to preach his gospel of Independency.

"When God would plant New England," some one has said, "he sifted the whole Church to get the Protestants; he sifted the Protestants to get the Puritans; and he sifted the Puritans to get the Independents." Every one of these movements in England had its cradle in some sort in Cambridge. Thomas Bilney, who first

preached Luther influentially in England, who converted Hugh Latimer, and sealed his faith in flames at Norwich, was a Cambridge man. So was Thomas Cartwright who, ten years before Brewster came to Cambridge, preached Calvinism there in Presbyterian form; and so was Robert Browne, the author of Independency. The Pilgrim Fathers and all the early Independents, who were popularly called Brownists, disparaged Robert Browne, abominating his "apostasy," and seeking to shake off the odium of his name. "Few of them ever saw his writings," Bradford says; and Englishmen like to claim that Fitz and Rough and others practised Independency before Robert Browne preached it. Yet Robert Browne was the real apostle of Independency. It was he who first preached it with power, and it was he who gave the doctrine shape. Nor can I, for one, remembering the long years of hardship, the "thirty dungeons," which he endured for the sake of his vision before being coerced into silence and conformity, be of those who cast the stone at him, and say he was no hero. He stands in the front rank of pioneers of religious liberty,— our religious liberty here in America. He was the link between John Calvin and John Robinson, that revered teacher of Brewster and the Pilgrim Fathers, who, like Calvin, never in

New England in the flesh, was present at Plymouth in the spirit as a controlling influence until he died. It was in Robert Browne's two books, "Reformation without Tarrying for Any" and "The Life and Manners of All True Christians," which, printed in his exile in Holland, were stealing into England just as Brewster left Cambridge, that Congregationalism, or Independency, found its first strong statement in the modern world. The doctrines which brought William Brewster and the Pilgrim Fathers together at Scrooby and drove them to Holland and then to Plymouth were the doctrines expounded by Robert Browne in these revolutionary books.

What were the doctrines? Simply these: that, wherever two or three are gathered together in purity of doctrine and innocency of life, there is all that is necessary to constitute a Christian church; and that any may preach or teach whom the others choose to hear. A few words sum up the theory; but the whole of modern democracy is in them. The relation of religion to politics in this world is immediate. When James I. said, "No bishop, no king," he said a sagacious thing. He saw well enough at the beginning what we all see now, — that when "Jack and Tom and Will and Dick," as he phrased it, have the right to stand up in the congregation and have

their say about Church matters, they will soon have their say about State matters, too. Men who can form a church by simply signing a covenant will in due time, and that no long time, pass on to the "Mayflower" Compact, the Fundamental Orders, the Agreement of the People, and all the rest. Town meetings, constitutional conventions, initiative and referendum, all are involved, and will be evolved as rapidly as necessary.

The little Scrooby congregation, the "Mayflower" company, was the most illustrious and almost the first church in modern history based upon this principle of Independency. By and by Cromwell and the army came to it; it was the polity of the Commonwealth; it was the common doctrine of Puritanism in its full development. But Brewster and the Pilgrim Fathers grasped it in the beginning: they were pioneers; and they bore the doctrine hither in the "Mayflower," to be the corner-stone of our religious and political institutions. Carlyle compares the "Mayflower," breasting the stormy sea and lonely shore, to the "Argo," and well tells us that she bore a richer freight. We may say more than this. We may say that she was the most significant and reverend ship in human history, more sacred than the "Santa Maria," and to be in the youth of fame when Nelson's "Victory" and "Téméraire," and "Constitu-

tions," "Monitors," "Great Easterns," and "Oceanics" innumerable are hasting to forgetfulness. It was here on New England soil that Independency first reached its growth; and it was as the "New England way" that it conquered Cromwell's army and conquered Puritan England. It was no accident by which the most republican, the most American, of the illustrious leaders of the Commonwealth, the author of "A Healing Question," should have been Sir Harry Vane, he of their number who had been a citizen of Boston, governor of Massachusetts, and a member of the household of John Cotton.

The central figure in that "Mayflower" congregation was William Brewster. He was the Father of the Pilgrim Fathers,— "the most eminent person in the movement," as says Joseph Hunter, "and who, if that honor is to be given to any single person, must be regarded as the Father of New England." Of all the founders of New England, he was the man who had had the largest public experience, who had seen the most of the world of men and great affairs, who had been in closest touch with politics and statecraft, who had personally known and seen most of the glories of the Elizabethan age. We have noticed that he was born just as Elizabeth's reign began. He came to the court, to enter the ser-

vice of Sir William Davison, in the same year that William the Silent was assassinated, and when the diplomatic negotiations between England and Holland, in which he was himself to bear an important part, were of greatest moment. He died, to round the chronology, in the year (1644) of Marston Moor and the birth of William Penn. Few lives, indeed, have spanned a period more significant. England, in all her history, had known no moment of such interest as that when the youthful Brewster came from the University of Cambridge to the court of Elizabeth. She had known no such illustrious group of men as that then in London. Sir William Davison, into whose immediate service Brewster came, was a statesman of conspicuous greatness even in that age of great statesmen, loved and praised by his eminent associates as the possessor of almost every public and private virtue. Among his associates as secretaries of state were the great Burleigh; Sir Walter Mildmay, whom Brewster may well have heard speak often of the "oak" which he had planted at Cambridge; and Walsingham, above all others zealous in the interest of American exploration and colonization. One likes to imagine William Brewster in warm converse with Richard Hakluyt as he comes for conference with Walsingham or another. The talk is of

Sir Humphrey Gilbert, who had been lost on his return voyage from Newfoundland the year before Brewster came to court; or of Sir Francis Drake, who had got home to Plymouth from his sailing round the world three years before that; or of Martin Frobisher and his search for the North-west Passage. It was the heyday of the great Elizabethan seamen; and the Armada was just ahead, to go into history before Brewster became post of Scrooby. It was the heyday of Elizabethan genius. It was while Brewster was in Davison's service that William Shakespeare came from Stratford to London. He was the youngest of the brilliant Elizabethan galaxy, four years younger than Brewster. Sidney was six years older than Brewster, Spenser seven years, Raleigh eight years older. All of these men save Sidney, to whom Brewster himself transferred the keys of Flushing in 1585, and who fell the next year at Zutphen, died — Raleigh on the scaffold — while Brewster was at Scrooby or at Leyden; and the same period witnessed the assassination of Henry IV. and the deaths of Montaigne, Tasso, and Cervantes. In 1587 came the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots, involving Davison's own fall and Brewster's with him; in 1588, the Armada. Add to this the great drama in Holland. It is when we think of the bare, stern,

solitary life for the quarter-century at Plymouth with the contrast of this stirring, brilliant background of momentous political, martial, and literary history, that we grasp the full meaning, the pathos, tragedy, and heroism of the life of William Brewster.

That young Brewster should have been received to the responsible and confidential place which he occupied in the service of the great Secretary of State clearly implies important family position or influence and high qualification. Bradford tells us that Davison "trusted him above all others that were about him, and only employed him in all matters of greatest trust and secrecy. He esteemed him rather as a son than a servant, and for his wisdom and godliness he would converse with him in private more like a friend and familiar than a master."

Brewster could hardly have been at court more than a year when he was called upon to accompany Davison on his important diplomatic mission to Holland, in connection with the closer union between England and Holland immediately after the assassination of William. A quarter of a century later, in his middle life, he was to come again, as a religious fugitive, among these scenes which now in youth he visited as a courtier, amid the pomp and pageantry of war; and

in many an evening hour at Amsterdam and Leyden, in that hard and humble later day, must he have meditated on the contrast. His service now with Davison was important and was honored. When the keys to Flushing, which was surrendered for English occupancy, were given to Davison by the Dutch authorities, they were by him committed to Brewster, who, we read, slept the first night with them under his pillow, and who transferred them to Sir Philip Sidney when he arrived a month later to take command. At Flushing he witnessed the pageant when Leicester came, and Essex. The enthusiasm of both Dutch and English over the alliance was demonstrative and intense. "Whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder!" was the device upon the banner borne from town to town as the English lords and warriors moved from Flushing to Middelburg, to Rotterdam, to Delft, the Hague, and on to Leyden and Amsterdam. Davison and Brewster accompanied Leicester on the whole triumphant journey. At Middelburg the widow of William the Silent and Maurice, his youthful son, joined in the welcome. At Rotterdam they saw the newly erected statue of Erasmus; at Delft they stayed in the same palace where William had just been assassinated; at the Hague, Leicester in his speech paid high tribute

to Davison, declaring that no other Englishman knew Holland so well or was so highly esteemed by the Dutch people. At Leyden, which by and by was to be for a decade the home of Brewster and the Pilgrims, there was a great pageant provided, in which scenes were enacted illustrating the terrible siege of the city, which had taken place only eleven years before. When presently Davison returned to England, the States honored him with a gold chain; and his appreciation of Brewster appears from the fact that he commissioned him to wear the chain in England until they came to court.

In London, Brewster now came into close touch with Sir Edwin Sandys, whose friendship by and by, when the negotiations for removing to New England were in process, was to be of such conspicuous service. It was at just this time that Edwin Sandys and George Cranmer entered Davison's service with Brewster. They had studied together at Oxford, where Richard Hooker, the "judicious" Hooker, afterwards author of the "Ecclesiastical Polity," had been their tutor. Some will remember the amusing account given by Izaak Walton of the visit of the two young men to Hooker in his little rectory at Drayton Beauchamp. Hooker was now in London, master of the Temple, in the midst of his controversy with

Puritanism. The Calvinist Travers was his colleague; and Fuller tells us that "pure Canterbury" was in the ascendency at the Temple in the morning, "Geneva" in the afternoon. It is impossible that Brewster should not have been deeply interested in this exciting polemic, the more as his new friends were such friends of Hooker, with whom later both corresponded about his great ecclesiastical work. It was just after Brewster retired from London to Scrooby that Hooker retired to the quiet of Boscomb, where the first four books of the "Ecclesiastical Polity" were written. Hooker was the greatest champion of Episcopacy, as Cartwright, whose books Brewster presently printed at Leyden, was the chief English champion of Presbyterianism; and this glimpse of our pioneer Independent in relations with the leading representatives of the two other great church polities is an interesting one.

In February, 1587, Mary, Queen of Scots, was executed at Fotheringay Castle. The part of Davison in connection with the execution is well known. It was he who had carried to the Council the warrant which Elizabeth had signed and flung upon the floor, and who had seen that the warrant was carried into effect; and it was he upon whom the adroit and hypocritical rage of

the queen chiefly spent itself. Brewster remained faithfully beside him in his trouble, visiting him in the Tower and serving him in all ways possible; but Davison still lingered in the Tower when Brewster left London for Scrooby, where the Pilgrim history begins. It is a letter to Davison concerning Brewster, and Davison's comments on it, which throws some light upon the date when Davison was again in official life; for the letter, from Sir John Stanhope, the new Master of the Posts, is addressed to "Mr. Secretary Davison." It was written in August, 1590, and is a defence of the intended gift of the postmastership of Scrooby to some favorite of Stanhope, at the cost of Brewster, who had succeeded his father in the office, and who in some way had earned Sir John's disfavor. The letter is preserved in the Public Record Office in London, where I have seen it; and interesting, indeed, it is for the New Englander to read the indorsements on the back in Davison's own hand, bearing witness to Brewster's honor and efficiency, and reversing the order to dispossess him. The records show that Brewster acted as post of Scrooby from January, 1589, to September, 1607.

The Scrooby story is so familiar to every good New Englander that in this presence it is unnecessary to rehearse it. What Mecca in England

so sacred to us as "the sundry towns and villages, some in Nottinghamshire, some of Lincolnshire, and some of Yorkshire, where they border nearest together," which furnished those first little Independent congregations! Scrooby, with Bawtry and Austerfield beside it, is the Bethlehem of this Holy Land. Yet for two centuries the knowledge of the place was lost to New England, as for almost a century the Bible which contained the Genesis, Exodus, Joshua and Judges of the Pilgrim history was lost also. By strange coincidence it was the same English scholar, Joseph Hunter, who one year, 1854, revealed Scrooby and Austerfield, and the next year identified in London Bradford's Journal. It is Bradford, who as a youth walked over from Austerfield to the meetings in Brewster's house, who has bequeathed to us the story of them, and he who at the last paid the personal tribute to Brewster which tells us almost all we know of his biography and his character.

The little Scrooby congregation which Brewster gathered, we read, "ordinarily met at his house, which was a manor of the Bishop's." By the Bishop is meant the Archbishop of York, who was at this time Archbishop Sandys, father of Brewster's friend, Sir Edwin. It was a famous old house, which had associations with Wolsey

and Henry VIII., and which Leland had visited and written about in 1541. It was William Brewster's home for nearly twenty years. When he came to it from London, he found that the region was in religious destitution. Many people had not heard a sermon for years; and many of those who had heard them had heard wretched ones, from clergy with slight pretensions to godliness. Brewster, still a faithful member of the Church of England, devoted himself to securing good preachers for the neighborhood, and made large contributions for the improvement of the churches. But, growing ever more serious himself, he revolted more and more from the perfunctoriness of their life and services; and in 1606 the little Independent congregation was organized in his own house, with Richard Clifton as its first teacher, presently to be joined by John Robinson, coming to the north country from the eastern counties. In the old manor house, Brewster's five children were born. By and by, as the persecutions thickened, he was the chief organizer of the flight to Holland. He was one of the seven thrown into prison at Boston, when the first effort to escape had failed; and, when the second partially succeeded, he and Robinson stayed behind to help over those who remained, and were themselves the last to leave England for Holland.

During the year at Amsterdam and the eleven years at Leyden, Brewster and Robinson were the joint shepherds of the flock. "We choose none for governing elders but such as are able to teach," was written from Leyden to London, to point the distinction between this congregation's way and the French way. Elder Brewster was able to teach, and did do it upon occasion in Holland, as he did regularly during those long years at Plymouth. He was a scholar, and in Leyden prepared an English grammar, and helped support himself by teaching English to students in the university. The Pilgrims' stay in Holland almost exactly covered the twelve years' truce between Holland and the Spanish power. They lived among the tragical traces of the early years of the great conflict; their neighbors remembered the terrible time of the siege. Holland still swarmed with soldiers. There was probably no morning in the long years at Leyden when our fathers did not wake to the sound of the trumpet; and the near prospect of the renewal of the conflict was one important consideration which hastened their removal to New England. The period was also one of hot religious controversy. Arminius, who was born in the same year as Brewster, died the very year that the Pilgrims came to Leyden, where he had taught the-

ology; and polemics about free will and predestination were all about the Pilgrims' ears. The Synod of Dort, which defined the "five points" of Calvinism, and which, as its president said, "made hell tremble," was in session during their last years in Holland; and doubtless Robinson and Brewster came into touch with it. They surely heartily sympathized with its conclusions; but we do not like to believe that they rejoiced in the execution of Barneveldt and the imprisonment of Grotius, which followed it so closely.

Brewster's important work in Leyden was that of publishing. With one Thomas Brewer, he established in Leyden a secret press, where he printed and sent into England many books calculated to offend the powers that were in Church and State and to bring down their wrath. Their wrath was brought down, especially the hot wrath of James I.; and the score of letters which passed back and forth between the foreign office and the English ambassador in Holland before the press was found and silenced make interesting reading. They can all be found, with a full list of the books printed, in Arber's painstaking chapter. There were books by Cartwright and Robinson and Travers, and, most mischievous of all, David Calderwood's "Government of the Scotch Church" and "Perth Assembly." Here, indeed, were

books to stir James Stuart! "Judged by the ideas of his own age," as Arber well says, "Brewster was nothing less than a theological dynamitard."

Brewster joined with Robinson in conducting the correspondence with Sir Edwin Sandys and others in London in the negotiations preceding the removal from Leyden to New England. Sir Edwin Sandys was now treasurer and governor of the Virginia Company; and Brewster thus after thirty years comes into touch again with his old associate in the service of Davison. All through the negotiations we keep coming upon words from London showing the suspicion of the Pilgrims' Independency, which was there working against them. It was only the shrewdest diplomacy that saved their project from shipwreck. "For the discipline of the Church in the colonies," Lord Bacon had said,—and his maxims governed the Council,—"it will be necessary that it agree with that which is settled in England; and, to that purpose, it will be fitting that all the colonies be subordinate under some bishop of this realm. The tenets of separatists and sectaries are full of schism and inconsistent with monarchy. Discipline by bishops is fittest for monarchy." Robinson and Brewster had drawn up a statement in seven articles, putting their principles in the most tem-

perate form, to allay irritation; but the Council easily saw that the articles were very shaky on the sacraments and "the ecclesiastical ministry." "Who shall make your ministers?" asked Sir John Wolstenholme, who had undertaken to submit their "further explanation" to the Council. "The power of making them is in the church," they answered; and it came near wrecking their enterprise. Sir John saw that, the more they explained, the worse it got for them; and he was shrewd enough and kind enough to keep their "further explanation" away from the Council-board.

Brewster and Robinson, at this time at any rate, were not separatists of the extreme sort. The early Brownists had gone so far as to declare the Church of England no true church at all. Robinson himself had been "more rigid at first" than he was at Leyden. Roger Williams in his Massachusetts days was a strict separatist, like Smith at Amsterdam. The Pilgrims were stanch believers in their own Independency. They believed it was the polity of the primitive churches and the polity most favorable to piety and progress: they believed that in their time the cause of freedom was bound up with it; but they treated all of their Christian brethren with tolerance, respect, and love. "If any," writes

Winslow "(joining to us formerly either when we lived at Leyden in Holland or since we came to New England), have, with the manifestation of their faith and profession of holiness, held forth therewith separation from the Church of England, I have divers times, both in the one place and the other, heard either Master Robinson, our Pastor, or Master Brewster, our Elder, stop them forthwith, showing them that we required no such things at their hands, but only to hold forth faith in Christ Jesus, holiness in the fear of God, and submission to every ordinance and appointment of God, leaving the Church of England to themselves and to the Lord." They believed that all jealousy and friction between themselves and the Puritan Anglican clergy would disappear instantly under changed conditions. In his farewell sermon to the Pilgrims in Holland, Robinson said, advising them to close with the godly party in England and "rather to study union than division": "There will be no difference between the unconformable ministers and you when they come to the practice of the ordinances out of the kingdom." The history of Salem and Boston from the first was the fulfilment of his prophecy.

Of the little congregation at Plymouth, Brewster was at once pastor and teacher and

elder. Had Robinson come over, he would have resumed the pastoral office over the reunited church. But it was settled at Leyden that "those that went should be an absolute church of themselves." Robinson objected, on no good Congregational grounds, to Brewster administering the sacraments; and so for several years the Plymouth church went without the sacraments. But that was all, and the church doesn't seem to have been much the worse for it. Marriages, from the beginning, at Plymouth were civil, performed by the magistrate, "according to the laudable custom of the Low Countries in which they had lived." They could not find in the word of God that marriage was "tyed to ministrie." The Plymouth church was a church of laymen. Its elder was one of the most faithful of pastors, but he was simply a brother among brethren. He was nurse in sickness, he labored with his hands in the fields, and he was as much counsellor in politics as in religion. If we had the original draft of the Compact signed on board the "Mayflower," it is an even chance that we should find it in his hand.

To us New Englanders that Plymouth life is as familiar as the very gospel story; and no other story save that alone is so simple and tender and sacred. It is the babe in the manger

again, the cradle of our era. It is the apotheosis of heroism. Since Luther at Worms, I know of no such heroic picture as that of the Pilgrims gathered on the shore, at the end of the winter of death, to see the "Mayflower" sail. With half their number lying in their graves in the wheat-field, "not one looked back who had set his hand to this ploughing." Through the tremulous years comes the devout prayer of the elder, and the resolute, unspoken antiphon: "Here we stay: we cannot do otherwise. God help us! Amen!"

Memorable glimpses of the little church we get from time to time through outside eyes. Beautiful is the picture drawn by De Rasieres, coming over from New Amsterdam in 1627, of the little community on Sunday morning marching to meeting in the fort on the hill, the men with their guns, the governor and elder and captain side by side at the head. Beautiful is the picture preserved by Winthrop in his journal of his visit to Plymouth with Rev. John Wilson, the pastor of the Boston church, in 1632, Bradford and Brewster coming out of the town to meet and greet them.

"On the Lord's day there was a sacrament, which they did partake in; and, in the afternoon, Mr. Roger Williams, according to their custom,

propounded a question, to which their pastor, Mr. Smith, spoke briefly; then Mr. Williams prophesied; and after the Governour of Plimouth spake to the question; after him the Elder; then some two or three more of the congregation. Then the Elder desired the Governour of Massachusetts and Mr. Wilson to speak to it, which they did. When this was ended, the Deacon, Mr. Fuller, put the congregation in mind of their duty of contribution; whereupon the Governour and all the rest went down to the deacon's seat, and put into the box, and then returned."

At this time Rev. Ralph Smith had been "exercising his gifts" among them for three years, and they now had the sacraments. At one time, while Brewster still lived, Charles Chauncey was teacher at Plymouth; at one time, for a winter, John Norton. But so long as Brewster lived, he was the colony's venerated "father in God"; and at Duxbury, which he made his home in his last years, he served actively as teacher till 1637. At Duxbury he died in 1644, at the age of fourscore and four. "His sickness was not long, and till ye last day therof he did not wholy keepe his bed. His speech continued till somewhat more than halfe a day, & then failed him; and about 9 or 10 oclock that evning he dyed, without any pangs at all . . . and so sweetly departed this life unto a better."

Bradford's tribute to Brewster is one of the most beautiful and most valuable passages in his history. "Haply more may be done hereafter," he says, as if he felt the inadequacy of what he wrote and purposed something fuller; but nothing more was ever written. Brief as it is, however, it is more than he devoted to Robinson in his pages; and it is our authority touching Brewster's life. His early history is reviewed; and then the touching story told of the hardships at Plymouth, which he so cheerfully endured. High tribute is paid to his ministry, by which many were brought to God. "He did more in this behalf in a year than many that have their hundreds a year do in all their lives." His rare wisdom in the government of the church and its preservation in purity and peace is noticed; and the personal picture is tenderly drawn.

For his personall abilities, he was qualified above many; he was wise and discreete and well spoken, having a grave & deliberate utterance, of a very cherfull spirite, very sociable & pleasante amongst his freinds, of an humble and modest mind, of a peaceable disposition, under vallewing him self & his owne abilities, and some time over valewing others; inoffencive and inocente in his life & conversation, wch gained him ye love of those without, as well as those within; yet he would tell them plainely of their faults & evills, both publickly & pri-

vatly, but in such a manner as usually was well taken from him. He was tender harted, and compassionate of such as were in miserie, but espetialy of such as had been of good estate and ranke, and were fallen unto want & poverty, either for goodnes & religions sake, or by ye injury & oppression of others; he would say, of all men these deserved to be pitied most. And none did more offend & displease him then such as would hautily and proudly carry & lift up themselves, being rise from nothing and having litle els in them to comend them but a few fine cloaths, or a litle riches more then others. In teaching, he was very moving & stirring of affections, also very plaine & distincte in what he taught; by which means he became ye more profitable to ye hearers. He had a singuler good gift in prayer, both publick & private, in ripping up ye hart & conscience before God, in ye humble confession of sinne, and begging ye mercies of God in Christ for ye pardon of ye same. He always thought it were better for ministers to pray oftener, and devide their prears, then be longe & tedious in ye same (excepte upon sollemne & spetiall occations, as in days of humiliation & ye like). His reason was, that ye harte & spirits of all, espetialy ye weake, could hardly continue & stand bente (as it were) so long towards God, as they ought to doe in yt duty, without flagging and falling of.

No figure in the early history of New England is so affecting as that of Elder Brewster. The Plymouth Pilgrims, for the most part,— although

there were fine minds among them, and Bradford could quote Plato to good purpose on occasion, and Pliny and Seneca,— were simple folk from the farms and villages round about Scrooby, poor peasant people, although schooled indeed in the school of hard and varied experience. But Elder Brewster, the father of the flock, was a scholar in exile, a man of gentle blood, of Cambridge culture, of experience in courts, carrying in memory a picture gallery hung with great portraits and historic scenes. He spoke Latin readily, and knew Greek and Hebrew. Here in the wilderness he had what was for those days, even in England, a large library. It contained at his death four hundred volumes, many of them costly quartos and folios. Nearly one hundred of these volumes were published after 1620, showing in what close touch he kept himself with the world's great life after he came hither. Dr. Dexter has said that "probably New England in the first quarter-century had not another so rich exegetical library." But it was not simply exegetical nor theological. There were twenty-four volumes of history, six of philosophy, fourteen of poetry, and fifty-four on miscellaneous subjects. There were eleven works which Brewster himself had printed at Leyden. There was John Smith's "Description of New England" and

various volumes of travel; there were volumes of Machiavelli and Aristotle; there was Bacon's "Advancement of Learning"; and there were books on English government and politics. Such was the environment in his heroic exile of the father of the Pilgrim Fathers.

It is difficult for us to realize to-day how much the struggle of church polities meant in England and New England three centuries ago. The early Independents were not theoretical men, but practical Englishmen,— men of the sort disposed to say, as Englishmen have usually been, "Let well enough alone." They asserted their doctrine of Independency because a practical exigency commanded it. They were subjected to ecclesiastical tyranny; and, as Englishmen of common sense and honor, they knew that there must be some valid theory adequate to the situation, and they found it. Had Episcopacy dealt justly, there would then have been no Independency. When Archbishop Tillotson expressed to Increase Mather, a century after Brewster became post of Scrooby, his abhorrence of the course of the Church of England at that time, the old Puritan exclaimed, "If such had been the bishops, there had never been a New England!" But the bishops were what they were; and Independency, when once compelled, had no lack of theoretical justification

from its founders. John Robinson and William Brewster were quite able to hold their own in controversy; and William Bradford could appeal to Christ's place in the synagogue, and to the words of Origen and others of the Fathers, in his argument that the proper distinction between clergy and laymen in the church was no fundamental one. Robinson was right in predicting that "those who oppose them in England, if they might come to a place of peace away from the Bishops, would do as they did." The men who came to Salem in 1629 and to Boston in 1630 came protesting their love for the Church of England, although condemning its corruption. But immediately we find the Salem company uniting to form a church by covenant, and electing their pastor and teacher, with Bradford and others coming up from Plymouth to give the right hand of fellowship at the ordination; and Winthrop's company shows the same fraternal spirit toward Plymouth when they form their church, now the First Church in Boston. Episcopacy could not live then on this soil and in this air. We cannot imagine John Wilson tempted to read the liturgy one month after he reached this side of the ocean. Indeed, it had been John Cotton's charge to the Massachusetts company when they came away that "they should take advice of

them at Plymouth"; and we find Cotton saying afterward that the Plymouth way had been the "leaven" of all the New England churches. Whatever there was contrary quickly succumbed to the power of that simple democratic congregationalism.

Distinctly the American polity, Independency has profoundly affected every other polity, not only in America, but in all the world. By virtue of its influence, Episcopacy and Presbyterianism are both no longer what they were. The Episcopal bishop of Massachusetts would no more meddle with Trinity Church in the choice of its minister than with the First Church or the Old South. Puritanism itself has won the universal honor of all serious religious men; and among the noblest recent tributes to it have been those by Phillips Brooks, Bishop Lawrence, and Professor Nash of the Episcopal Theological School at Cambridge. Affecting other polities as it has done, Independency has also undeniably at times been affected by them in its turn, and this often to its cost, as Unitarians who remember events at Saratoga ought not to need be told. Any attempt by synods or conferences to formulate doctrinal bases of fellowship by which Independent congregations or ministers feel under any stress to measure themselves cometh of

evil and tends to confusion. It is alien to the genius of the polity, and is to be disregarded by every genuine Independent. When one goes back to the early covenants of the old New England churches themselves, one is deeply impressed by their simplicity and breadth, by what we may rightly term their modernness as compared with the creeds and confessions of most Congregational churches in the intervening years.

Politics and religion with the Independent went hand in hand. Church and State were to him two instruments for advancing the kingdom of God; and in the same meeting-house where he came to pray on Sunday he came to vote on Monday. You devote a lecture in this course to Thomas Jefferson and the Influence of Democracy on Religion. The real subject of this word on Brewster is the Influence of Religion on Democracy. The two great words which the Puritan movement evolved or first made current and potent among men were "Independence" and "Commonwealth"; and both of these the sturdy and fraternal church at Plymouth exemplified in highest measure.

The Thursday lecture, in John Cotton's day, was meant for edification and for admonition; and we should be faithless sons of the Puritans if here to-day we dealt simply with history, and did

not—to choose the Puritan term—make "uses" of the history. And I know of no use to which we can put it better than that pointed out by John Cotton's own farewell sermon, "God's Promise to His Plantation," preached to the founders of Boston as they sailed away from Southampton. "If God plant us, who shall pluck us up?" he asked, charging the colonists to make themselves "trees of righteousness," and exhorting all who were planted at home or intended to plant abroad to look that they be "rightly planted." "Go forth, every man that goeth, with a public spirit, looking not on your own things only, but also on the things of others." "Look well to the plants that spring from you," he added, "that is, to your children, that they do not degenerate"; for, as he well reminded them, and as we need to remind ourselves to-day, "ancestors of a noble, divine spirit" cannot save. The sins of the children shall be upon them; and if we, the sons, to-day, if the people of this great republic, are planting at home or abroad any trees of unrighteousness, then let us not fail to know that they will bear for us bitter fruit. If we are laying anywhere in the wide world foundations in iniquity, then, though we build upon them walls of wood, hay, and stubble, or gold, silver, and precious stones, our work will fail.

We are in the centennial of Jefferson's administration; the year is the centennial of the birth of Emerson. Said Emerson half a century ago: "The Americans have many virtues, but they have little faith. They rely on the power of a dollar: they are deaf to a sentiment. They think you may talk the north wind down as easily as raise society; and no class more faithless than the scholars or intellectual men." You will also remember well his word to the young American scholar facing the hundred voices which would tell him that the first duty is to get land and money, place and name. How is it after half a century? We are reading William James's stern and tonic Puritan word upon our scholars' paralyzing fear of poverty; and yesterday our revered Mary Livermore, with her fourscore years of experience, spoke this word: "A large minority, if not a majority, of average Americans are reckless of the liberties of other people. They would not hesitate to risk 'all the prized charters of the human race' for a tariff that would make them rich or a war on a helpless people that would open to them a market for their particular products. With this class there is but one supreme good in life,— money. Whatever pays is right."

Such, say many voices, is the love of money in

the republic to-day. How does the love of freedom fare? Senator Hoar, in the same speech in which he warns us of the menace of money to the republic, also tells us of the distinguished Republican senator who had said to him that he had come to regard the abolition of slavery as a mistake. Few leaders, surely, of the party which still claims the name of Abraham Lincoln would go so far as that; yet the word finds many echoes — and our general recreancy to the freedmen of the South is gross. "The clauses of the Constitution that protect money are sacred; the clauses that protect personal and political rights are not too sacred to be explained away."

Lincoln was the child of Jefferson, whose influence upon religion you have so well chosen to emphasize in this course of lectures. "The principles of Jefferson," said Lincoln, "are the definitions and axioms of free society." What were the principles of Jefferson? What did he aim at for this republic and for the world? He dreamed that the birth of this republic should mark a new era for mankind. We were not here to re-enact the history of England or of Rome. Humanity, fraternity, and peace were at our hands to supplant the ways of conquest, war, and blood. "He believed that Americans might safely set an example which the Christian world

should be led by interest to respect and at length to imitate. He would not consent to build up a new nationality merely to create more navies and armies, to perpetuate the crimes and follies of Europe. The central government at Washington should not be permitted to indulge in the miserable ambitions that had made the Old World a hell and prostrated the hopes of humanity."

How is it with us as we keep the centennial and put Jefferson into a Thursday lecture in John Winthrop's church? How is it with us a generation after Abraham Lincoln? Are we hating slavery and loving freedom more and more? Do we hate war more? Has possession, indeed, become more sacred in our eyes than personal and political rights? Have we overcome the lust of territorial aggrandizement, — that original sin of nations, as Gladstone so well called it? Have we since the days of Jefferson and James Monroe grown steadily more sensitive to the rights of ruder and weaker peoples struggling for independence and better things? Have we come to attach less and less credit ever to guns and gunboats, mammon and manœuvres, in the process of civilization, and to cherish more and more the proud distinction and high office which for the century following Jeffer-

son has been ours, of being the great peace power of the world?

For from Jefferson to Lincoln, despite the shame of slavery, we certainly were the central political influence among the nations, the primary world power, the leaven of the lump. Our constitution was copied in each new constitution; our theory of the true relation of Church and State has been conquering all nations; our system of public education, founded at Plymouth by our fathers almost as soon as they landed, has proved a contagious example for the world; nations and men everywhere struggling for freedom and for opportunity have turned their faces toward us as they prayed.

How is it with us in this centennial time, measured by the ideals of the fathers, by our own record, and the world's great hope, measured by Emerson and Jefferson and Plymouth Rock? Are the moralities and the spiritualities keeping pace with the materialities? It surely was not pleasant for you and for me, sons of the Puritans, to read but yesterday the judgment of the English statesman, that in these last years America had ceased to be a moral power in the world, and had dropped back to the level of the other selfish, warring nations. It is not pleasant to read the judgment of this other scholar, that

for a generation our political fertility, so long the world's dominant resource and hope, has largely ceased, and that we are now giving to the world far less in progressive principle and method than it is giving us. How is it? Are we teaching Europe, or is Europe teaching us, pure and efficient municipal government? How does co-operative industry stand with us as compared with England or Italy or France? Are we Switzerland's teacher or backward pupil in direct legislation and rational representation? Do we teach New Zealand, or does she teach us, how to deal with coal strikes? Did we get our new system of land registration and our ballot law from Pennsylvania or from Australia?

Is this the whole picture? It is not the whole picture. But it is the part on which the Puritan asks us to-day to fix our solemn attention. It is the part which the Puritan commands us to paint out. He bids us remember that no fertility and no enterprise and no superiority in iron or steel, in engines or guns, can compensate for barrenness in progressive political thought, and that no "American invasion" of the world can do the world or do ourselves any long or real good, which is not primarily an invasion of ideals, of freedom and of the sovereignty of God. Our fathers were the first colonists in human history — that

is the way our poet puts it — who went forth seeking "not gold, but God." Are we their children? — that is the question which, in face of what confronts us, we need to keep asking.

At the Pilgrim Festival in New York in 1850, Webster pictured Elder Brewster entering the room, in his simple, mild austerity, and dwelling with amazement on all that the country had become since the small beginnings at Plymouth. "Are you our children?" he finally makes him exclaim. "Does this scene of elegance, of riches, of luxury, come from our labors?" And he adds: "We envy you not, we reproach you not. Be rich, be prosperous, if such be your allotment on earth; but live always to God and to duty." So long as the children still cherished an undying love for civil and religious liberty, so long the great orator was sure that the great Elder would breathe his benediction on their festivals. And so he would. But could he come to some of the festivals to-day of those who name themselves still by the Pilgrim name,— could he mark the ostentation, the indulgence, the arrogance, the pride,— he would take, be sure, no such easy departure. Far, far indeed would he pronounce all this from the spirit and the aims and the atmosphere of the men who signed the compact on the "Mayflower."

Not gold, but God; not ourselves, but mankind. "Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide." It comes with the fullness of powers, comes when the man and the nation are passing from youth into maturity. Emerson has told us how it comes to the young scholar. So it comes to the nation,— the temptation to cease the eagle's flight, to temper the strenuousness of the spirit, to pause in the high emprise, with its stern demands, to accept the beaten path, the easier task, the quick profit, the old way. Get land and money. What is this freedom which you seek for men? What is this peace on earth? If, nevertheless, sounds still the Puritan voice from the heavens above to every nation under heaven, God has called you to the service of progress, called you to be pioneers of liberty, be bold, be firm, be true. When you shall say, As others do, so will I; if others will be spoilers, so will I; I, too, will trust in my great guns; I will eat the good of the land, and let equality and fraternity go until a more convenient season,— then dies the soul in you, then once more die the buds of hope and prophecy and blessing and divine opportunity, as they have died already in the hundred nations whose wrecks are strewn on the shores of the ages.

God save our dear republic from "the great refusal"! God will save it. And he will save it precisely because, as the wise English thinker told us here in Boston twenty years ago, it had a Puritan youth and has had, more than any other nation, the Puritan discipline. The only real politicians, said Socrates to the Athenians, who were so sadly and so soon to prove its truth, were those who kept insisting on the good of righteousness and the unprofitableness of iniquity. And our republic shall stand because there shall not fail a sufficiency of teachers and of righteous men who shall cherish and make potent the Puritan's faith in the sovereignty of God, the fear of God, which alone is the bulwark of liberty, as it is the beginning of wisdom.

"O ye who boast
In your free veins the blood of sires like these,
Lose not their lineaments. Should Mammon cling
Too close around your heart, or wealth beget
That bloated luxury which eats the core
From manly virtue, or the tempting world
Make faint the Christian purpose in your soul,
Turn ye to Plymouth's beach, and on that rock
Kneel in their footprints, and renew the vow
They breathed to God."

# II

## Roger Williams and His Doctrine of Soul-liberty

# ROGER WILLIAMS AND HIS DOCTRINE OF SOUL-LIBERTY.

Lord Macaulay, with his famous facility for epigram and sweeping assertion, once wrote: "In England in the seventeeth century there were only two great creative minds. One of these produced the 'Paradise Lost,' and the other the 'Pilgrim's Progress.'" It is my wish to-day to show, if possible, that at least one other creative mind was working beside these two; to tell you how, in the very years that the trumpet-note of "Areopagitica" was first heard in England, a still bolder assertion of liberty was made by a friend of Milton in America; and how, when Bunyan was dreaming in Bedford jail of a celestial city, an equally intrepid spirit was founding a city at the head of Narragansett Bay, in which no dreamer or prophet should ever suffer for uttering his message to the world. The noble defence of freedom in "Areopagitica" we shall never willingly let die. The great dream of a heavenly city we shall always cherish. But we would place beside these "assertors of the soul" another spirit, the man who first in the modern world created a state that was truly free.

Still the visitor to Providence walks along the bank of the Seekonk River and looks upon the shattered and crumbling rock where Roger Williams landed. The rock is vanishing, but the principle he enunciated has shown a "rocky strength" that will outlive all monuments; and the idea embodied in the obscure colony by a fugitive and outlaw is now accepted, in theory at least, by every civilized State. He was not a saint. No aureole played about his head in the eyes of his contemporaries. His faults were obvious and insistent. But he was a man to be reckoned with when living; and, being dead, he yet speaketh.

It seems strange that no portrait has been preserved. Accordingly, upon the dome of the new State capitol of Rhode Island stands no figure of Roger Williams, but rather a figure symbolical of the "independent man" that he was and wanted all to be.

Records of his early life are scanty. It seems probable that he was a Welshman, and born about 1601. We find him subsequently entered at the Charter-house School in London, and then at Pembroke College, Cambridge. After graduation he studied law with Sir Edward Coke, who was drawn to Roger Williams by that same subtle attraction which Williams exerted through-

out his life. The man who was the intimate friend of Sir Harry Vane, of Cromwell and Milton, of the Governors Winthrop, father and son, and who drew testimony to his personal character from John Cotton and Cotton Mather, certainly was a man of no ordinary power.

But he developed little taste for the law, and soon we find him studying theology and disputing on religious subjects. Why he left England we do not know. Long before he left he became thoroughly opposed to the Established Church and all its ways. In 1631 we find him arriving at Boston on the ship "Lyon," thirty years of age, of fine, sturdy physique, indomitable energy, and opinions which would be heard from speedily. Winthrop chronicles his arrival as that of a "godly minister"; and, if godliness be utter sincerity, unfaltering devotion to the ideal, and unselfish desire to do good, Winthrop was right.

We have no time to chronicle the events of his varied life, and no need to go over the thoroughly familiar ground. His immediate refusal to officiate for the church in Boston on the ground that they had not really separated from the Church of England, his becoming assistant minister at Salem, in spite of the protest of the General Court at Boston, and his removal to the tolerant atmosphere of Plymouth are known to us all.

At Plymouth, where his first child was born, he spent two happy years, surrounded by honor and esteem. Yet Elder Brewster and some others looked with concern upon the radical opinions of the young minister, and feared precisely what happened later; namely, that he would depart from all churches and become a pure individualist in religion. During this period he cultivated the friendship of the Indian tribes of the region, and came to have great influence with their sachems, especially with Massasoit of the Wampanoags, father of King Philip, and with Canonicus of the Narragansetts. "My soul's desire," he says in a later letter, "was to do the natives good." And again he writes, "God was pleased to give me a painful patient spirit to lodge with them in their filthy smoky holes (even while I lived at Plymouth and Salem) to gain their tongue."

But in 1634 he returned to Salem as the sole minister of the Salem church, in spite of the demands of the Boston magistrates that he should not be ordained. He was now face to face with the entire power, religious and civil, of the Massachusetts Theocracy. On the one side stood this young man, unarmed save with his tremendous conviction, with no support in the churches or governments of the civilized world; and on the other side Governor Endicott and John

Cotton and the entire theocratic claims and powers of the colony. He was ardent, eager, scornful of consequences, with a conscience marvellously tender and a will of iron, uniting the chivalry of Sir Galahad with the polemic skill of Aquinas and the missionary zeal of Judson. On the other side were the men we know so well, the men with whom we can sympathize in their grimmest mood, because we are their children, the men who were determined that the truth of God as they understood it should rule their infant colony, and that the vagaries of religious caprice should find no place in Massachusetts. With the quarrel of John Endicott and Roger Williams we have no concern. But the conflict of eternal principles incarnate in these men, the contest of the communions and civilizations which they represented, is a conflict wide as the world and long as time. Let us ask, then, what it was that Roger Williams maintained and the Theocracy condemned.

First of all, as we have said, he publicly and persistently rebuked the Massachusetts church for not abjuring all connection with the English Church, and for not repenting for having communed with that Church on English soil. The English Church was to him a nest of hateful prelacy. He boldly condemned the conduct of the

English sovereign in speaking of Europe as Christendom, and demanded that the Massachusetts church, by word and deed, absolve itself from all connection with English worship. These demands were simply a hastening of processes already in operation; but certainly, when made by a new-comer in a colony quite dependent on the royal favor, the man who makes them will not know the blessing of the peace-makers.

Furthermore, he contended, for much the same reason, that an oath should never be required of an unregenerate man, since an oath is an act of worship, and worship cannot be forced. In one aspect this seems merely a curious and harmless opinion. What Roger Williams wanted is now allowed in nearly every State in the Union, where the law permits affirmation by those who conscientiously object to taking oaths. But, as the magistrates were just at that time becoming suspicious of the loyalty of some of the inhabitants, and were on the point of imposing a freeman's oath, the demand of the Salem minister seemed to supply aid and comfort to the enemies of the State.

Again, Roger Williams contended that the charter of Massachusetts was invalid, since it was not based on any purchase from the Indians, but was merely a siezure sanctioned by the king. He

would have the charter returned to England. He even drafted a letter to the king, explaining his objections to the royal patent, and proposing a new basis for acquiring land in the New World. The ethical teacher, judging events in the "quiet and still air of delightful studies," must admit that Roger Williams could well defend his position. Our relations with the Indians of America are justified on biological rather than ethical grounds. We look back to-day on far more than a "century of dishonor," and may not examine too closely our title-deeds. Doubtless the King of England gave away that to which he had but shadowy claim. But we can hardly imagine the consternation produced by such teaching in a colony whose very right to existence was then called in question. Had they suffered so many things in vain? Had they cleared the wilderness, built churches and schools and towns, only now to be told that every settlement was illegal and every acre the property of savage foes? At this day we can discuss the wrongs of the Indian without perturbation. But when dusky forms are skulking through the forest just beyond the stockade, discussion on the foundations of ethical ownership is attended with difficulty. Although Roger Williams gladly in his later years availed himself of a charter for Rhode Island, yet in the original in-

stance he carefully purchased from the Indians the land on which he settled. If he was, as John Cotton said, "conscientiously contentious," he was also rigidly consistent.

But the crowning offence of the Salem minister was his steadfast declaration that the civil magistrate might not punish breaches of the first table of the Decalogue. That first table relates solely to duties toward God; and a man's relation to his Maker he affirmed to be altogether above and beyond the power of the State. Here again Roger Williams seems to be uttering truth that is to us commonplace and axiomatic, embodied in every court of every State in our Union, accepted by every religious denomination and every code of law in the republic. But the axioms of to-day are the heresies and anarchies of yesterday. On no such principle was Massachusetts founded. It was rather modelled after the old Hebrew Commonwealth, which punished blasphemy as well as murder, which enforced Sabbath-keeping as truly as justice, and which heard from the lips of inspiration the words: "Thine eye shall not pity and thy hand shall not spare." Roger Williams had brought to America his great doctrine of soul-liberty, imagining that here it would find congenial soil and swiftly become a mighty tree. But what seemed to him as to us so

clear, so logical, so inevitable, was to them monstrous and exasperating and intolerable. For a time at every session of the General Court the young minister was reproved or summoned or enjoined. At last, in 1635, the specific charges were formulated, and Roger Williams was examined by the magistrates. On advice of the ministers he was sentenced to depart from the colony within six weeks, banished, or, as John Cotton preferred to say, "enlarged" out of Massachusetts.

There will probably always be two opposing judgments regarding this famous sentence of banishment. This diversity has unfortunately tended to become a division between Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Defenders of Massachusetts, concerned for the honor of their State, have attempted to show that Roger Williams was a man with "windmills in his head"; that he was a Quixotic reformer,—an Ishmaelite, whose hand was against every man; and that a young colony, struggling for bare existence, could not tolerate such a personality without danger of dissolution. This is the view of Palfrey and Dexter and Henry Cabot Lodge. They have maintained that he was banished not for any religious conviction, but solely because of obstinacy, contumacy, and disturbance of the peace. And it has not

been difficult to maintain this view, since, as Professor Diman has well said, "Massachusetts was a community whose early eminence in letters afforded it marked advantage in impressing upon posterity its own view of any transaction in which it bore a part."

On the other hand, we have the view of Professors Knowles and Gammell and Thomas Durfee and Oscar S. Strauss, who maintain that Roger Williams has been misrepresented by Puritan historians, and that he was a true martyr to the doctrine of freedom of conscience in the New World. They affirm that, though there were irritating idiosyncrasies in the temperament of this apostle, though he was doubtless eccentric and at times alarming, yet the real cause of the trouble was that he was two centuries in advance of his time, and, while he faced the sunrise and the future, the Massachusetts colony obstinately faced the sunset and the dark. The most judicial discussions of the matter are, perhaps, to be found in the recently published works of Cobb and Richman. The more deeply we study the history of the time, the more clearly we perceive the irrepressible nature of the conflict, and the more genuine becomes our sympathy with the great protagonists. To approve or condemn either Massachusetts or Williams is easy. To understand them both is a worthier task.

All Christian governments of the seventeenth century held that the union of Church and State was necessary for the safety of the State and the preservation of the Church. For a thousand years this doctrine had been intrenching itself in Christendom, until it was practically unquestioned by the powers that were. Augustine, Charlemagne, Luther, Calvin, believed it and acted on it. Freedom of conscience for the individual was not asserted at the Reformation. "Cujus regio, ejus religio," was the decision embodied in the Peace of Augsburg. The English Reformation was political rather than religious, and demanded that the English sovereign should be both independent of the papal see and absolute head of the English Church. Luther recoiled from the excesses of Münster, and dared not intrust religion to freedom of conscience. The result of the Reformation was many national churches in place of one universal church, not liberty in place of authority. If religion was essential to the weal of the people, then the State could not neglect it. The theocracy which Calvin established at Geneva was cruelly logical and logically cruel. The first Helvetic Confession declares, "The chief office of the magistrate is to defend religion and to take care that the word of God be purely preached." The Westminster Assembly affirmed,

"The civil magistrate hath authority and it is his duty to take order that unity and peace be preserved in the church, that the truth of God be kept pure and entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented or reformed, and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered, and observed." If now the nations of the Old World, strong and well established, clung to these ideas, how tenacious and how frantic must have been the attachment to them on the part of the New England colony, conscious of its weakness, menaced by tyrants on the one side and fanatics on the other! It had been instructed by all Christian governments of the Old World, and it bettered their instructions. In the very year of Roger Williams's arrival the General Court of Massachusetts passed this resolution: "It is ordered that henceforth no man shall be admitted to the freedom of this commonwealth but such as are members of the churches within the limits of this jurisdiction." No voters except church members, and no church members except on approval of the clergy,— such was the compact, homogeneous, and militant organization now preparing to resist the newest thought of the age. By as much as New England was weaker than Old England, by so much more did it resolve on the policy

of exclusion of dangerous opinions. Robert Baillie, a zealous defender of the Presbyterian faith in Scotland, wrote in 1643, "They in New England are much more strict and rigid than we or any church to suppress by the power of the magistrate all who are not of their way."

What now was the doctrine of "soul-liberty" brought by the young minister into the rigid and rigorous ecclesiasticism of Massachusetts? It was far more than a doctrine of toleration. On this point confusion of thought still exists. Conceivably, we may occupy any one of three positions regarding the relations of the civil and the religious authority. We may affirm the duty of the government to support and control the institutions of religion; we may affirm as a concession to human weakness the expediency of tolerating false views of religion; or we may affirm the absolute wrong of any interference by the government in matters of religious faith. It was not the second of these positions — the duty of tolerating false opinions — on which Roger Williams planted his feet. It was the third and distinctly different position, that the government may not decide what is true and what is false in religion, may neither encourage nor repress religious doctrine, that it must refrain both from tolerance and intolerance, and, confining itself to the civil realm

entirely, leave the consciences of all men — Protestant, Catholic, Jew, Atheist — absolutely free.

This is clear from his explicit writings. In his massive volumes on "The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution" he declares that the "great cause of the indignation of the Most High against the state and country is . . . that all others dissenting from them, whether Jews or Gentiles, have not been allowed civil cohabitation with them, but have been distressed and persecuted by them." It is clear from his action in inserting a provision in the first charter of Providence that "otherwise than this [what is previously forbidden] all men may walk as their consciences persuade them, every one in the name of his God." The right to believe and practise one's own faith,— every man wants that. But Roger Williams wanted equal rights for the Turk and the Atheist, not because it was expedient to tolerate diversity, but because of the inherent right of every human soul to determine its own relation to its Maker.

We now see how inevitable was the struggle between the young champion of soul-liberty and the guardians of Massachusetts orthodoxy and society. Even toleration was regarded as a fatal blunder by the leaders of England and America. A noted English divine of that period wrote:

"Toleration will make the Kingdom a chaos, is a grand work of the devil, is a most transcendental, Catholic, and fundamental evil." The saintly Rutherford could say, "We regard the toleration of all religions as not far removed from blasphemy." The lines found in Governor Dudley's pocket after death express the fundamental purpose of his life,—

> "Let men of God in court and churches watch
> O'er such as do a toleration hatch."

The first legal code for the government of Massachusetts was drawn up by the Rev. Nathaniel Ward, of Ipswich, whose wisdom found vent in the following oracle: "It is said that men ought to have liberty of their conscience, and that it is persecution to debar them of it. I can stand amazed, then reply to this: It is an astonishment to think that the brains of men should be parboiled in such impious ignorance."

Was, then, Roger Williams, like Melchisedec, "without father or mother"? Were there no other voices in the world pleading for freedom? Assuredly there were. The Brownists, or Separatists, of England had for some years affirmed this doctrine; and to the Anabaptists of Holland it was the cardinal truth. To the despised Anabaptists — and what band of truth-bearers have

not been at first despised? — belongs the honor of recalling the Christian Church from the severity and cruelty of the Old Testament to the kindliness and charity of the New Testament. To the Anabaptists, in spite of crudities and excesses, belongs the honor, not of begging for toleration, but of asserting each man's right to worship or not to worship in his own way. One of them, Hendrick Terwoot, of Flemish extraction, who died at the stake in 1575, wrote, while in prison, "the first declaration in favor of complete religious liberty made on English soil": "Oh, that they would deal with us according to natural reasonableness and evangelical truth, of which our persecutors so highly boast! For Christ and his disciples persecuted no one. On the contrary Jesus hath taught: Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, &c . . . . From all this it is clear, that those who have the one true gospel doctrine and faith will persecute no one, but will themselves be persecuted." Robert Browne, who seems to have learned his doctrine from the Anabaptists of Norwich, wrote, "The magistrates have no ecclesiastical authority at all, but only as any other Christians, if so be they be Christians." In 1626 — five years before the landing of Roger Williams in Boston — there were, as Professor Vedder tells us, eleven Baptist churches in Eng-

land teaching the doctrine of complete religious liberty. We all know how the teaching of these small religious bodies found echo in the organ voice of Milton, and how sympathetic were the great souls of Oliver Cromwell and Sir Harry Vane. Roger Williams, the friend of these daring spirits and the representative of all the humble protesting congregations in England and Holland, stood forth in America to challenge the traditions of the centuries and usher in the dawn of God's new day.

But Massachusetts feared that dawn, and she had nearly the whole world with her. In 1635 the magistrates formulated four distinct charges against the Salem minister: —

First, that the magistrate ought not to punish the breaches of the first table, otherwise than in such cases as disturb the public peace.

Secondly, that he ought not to tender an oath to an unregenerated man.

Thirdly, that a man ought not to pray with such, though wife and child, etc.

Fourthly, that a man ought not to give thanks after sacrament, nor after meat, etc.

The last two charges are so petty, relating merely to scruples about family prayer, that we cannot believe that they touch the *gravamen* of his offence. The second charge, relating to the

taking of oaths, shows that Roger Williams desired in certain cases what is almost everywhere now allowed,— a judicial affirmation in place of a calling on God to witness. But the first charge contains the real reason of the commotion. It rightly states Roger Williams's doctrine,— that the magistrate might not interfere with any man's inner life, with his worship or opinions, so long as public peace was not disturbed. Here is the doctrine of soul-liberty springing full-grown into the New World, never again to retire. But to the clergy such doctrine was intolerable. Why should men have liberty of thought more than liberty of action? Is not the real deed always interior? and, if the government is to preserve morality, must it not deal with the beliefs which are the basis of conduct? Free religion was as abhorrent as the doctrine of free love in our age. It meant the loosing of all ties, the undermining of the entire social and legal order. The theocracy of Massachusetts was modelled on the Mosaic pattern, its laws following the old Deuteronomic code. Its courts had studied long and deeply the command, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," and the statute which ordered the blasphemer to be stoned. The Puritans had not come out into the American wilderness to offer their new homes as shelter to all the unclean

birds of Europe. They had not come with a vision of a land where each man might do and think as he pleased. They had come to incarnate in institutions certain definite, rigid convictions and to prevent any opposing institutions from finding a foothold beside them. They had come to escape a tyranny which they had found hateful and to establish a tyranny which they believed beneficent and essential. The colony of Massachusetts was not to be like the famous sheet let down from heaven, full of four-footed beasts and creeping things: it was to be a garden of the Lord, where a divinely ordained order of gardeners were to separate weeds from flowers, and pluck up every weed by the roots. To welcome all faiths was to confess that the false was as good as the true. To proclaim toleration of error was to assist in its propagation. To allow free thinking was soon to see free action. To offer welcome to every hair-brained enthusiast was to endanger the new Commonwealth unspeakably, and to connive at heresy and disintegration. It was into such a colony, possessed of such ideas, that Roger Williams stepped from the good ship "Lyon," bringing a doctrine of soul-liberty which was in itself a criticism on every institution in the colony, himself the foremost living apostle of non-conformity and indi-

vidualism. He was right, but he stood almost alone. Massachusetts was, judged by our present standards, in the wrong; but civilization and historical Christianity were with her. Not until 1833 was the standing order abolished on Massachusetts Bay. Not until about the same time did the churches of Connecticut dare to go alone. But, in 1631, Roger Williams looked Massachusetts in the face, and wrote: "Constantine and the good emperors are confessed to have done more hurt to the name and crown of Christ than the bloody Neros did. . . . Forcing of conscience is a soul-rape. . . . The civil sword may make a nation of hypocrites and anti-Christians, but not one Christian. . . . Persons may with less sin be forced to marry whom they cannot love than to worship where they cannot believe."

If now we ask the old unprofitable question whether Roger Williams was banished for purely religious or for political reasons, we see that various answers may be given. If we at this day are unable sharply to divide between religion and politics, certainly the seventeenth century was unable to do so. The phraseology of the decree of banishment seems to make it clear that the cause was the promulgation of obnoxious opinion: "Whereas, Mr. Roger Williams, one of the elders of the church at Salem hath broached and

divulged divers new and dangerous opinions against the authority of the magistrates; as also writ letters of defamation both of the magistrates and churches here, and that before any conviction and yet maintained the same without any retracting; it is therefore ordered," etc. On the other hand, when the exiled apostle reviews his own career, he lays emphasis on his action regarding Separation and the royal charter as being the chief cause of his troubles. Seldom, indeed, can we trace the tragedy of history to any one cause alone, or exactly assign praise and blame to the participants. If we cannot say, even after forty years, whether the causes of our great Civil War were economic or ethical, if we cannot clearly distinguish in the recent Spanish War between the altruistic and the imperialistic, small wonder that we cannot easily say whether the chief emphasis of the Puritan condemnation was on the inner religious conviction or the semi-political action of Roger Williams. Perhaps the sanest judgment is that of the latest historian, Mr. Richman, who, writing with the approval of James Bryce, declares, "Roger Williams offended against the Puritan Theocracy both by his religious opinions and by certain of his opinions which were ethico-political; his offence upon the score of religion being primary and funda-

mental, and that upon the score of politics incidental and contributory."

If now we follow Roger Williams into exile, we shall see that the dreamer was also a true leader of men. After that terrible "fourteen weeks in which he knew not what bed and board did mean," and a brief sojourn at what is now Rehoboth, he appeared with four or five companions on the Seekonk (Blackstone) River, and landed at the famous rock still shown in Providence. Subsequently he passed around Fox Point, and landing near a spring of clear fresh water, expressed his unswerving faith by naming his new resting-place Providence. Evidently, this man was one who

> "Wrought in a sad sincerity;
> Himself from God he could not free."

We thus see that Roger Williams was no mere theorist, but the founder of a state. He had small interest in pietistic doctrines of liberty. His profound interest was in creating a "refuge for distressed consciences." Others had preached religious liberty. Many men, before Columbus, had asserted that the world was round; but Columbus, by actually sailing over the horizon, changed geographical speculation into tangible fact. Roger Williams was a Columbus who dared to incarnate what he believed into actual enter-

prise, and to pass from theory into practice. He acted on his own principle. He was intensely practical, and no doctrine had any interest for him except as transmuted into life. Having purchased from the Indians land at the head of the Narragansett Bay, as he felt that Massachusetts should have done in making her first settlement, he divided this land among twelve associates. He did not think as yet of a state, but simply of a community. No man was ever more thoroughly free from personal ambition. The first president of the settlement was John Coggeshall, not Roger Williams. Two years later a compact was drawn up, and signed by thirteen persons. This unique and immortal document has been compared by Professor Diman with the compact signed in the cabin of the "Mayflower," and is certainly quite as prophetic of the future. It reads as follows: "We whose names are here underwritten, being desirous to inhabit in the town of Providence, do promise to submit ourselves in active or passive obedience to all such orders or agreements as shall be made for the public good of the body in an orderly way by the major consent of the present inhabitants, masters of families, incorporated together into a township, and such others whom they shall admit into the same, only in civil things."

That phrase "only in civil things," by whomsoever written, distinguishes the founding of Rhode Island from the founding of every other state which, up to that time, the world had seen. It gives the founder a unique and sure place among the leaders of humanity.

Let us now pass on to notice some of the consequences of this peculiar settlement of Rhode Island, in its subsequent history. The initial impulse in any community is likely to endure; and the State of Rhode Island to-day feels in every fibre of its body politic the influence of Roger Williams and his associates. It is impossible to understand any phase of Rhode Island life apart from the early history of the colony.

In the first place, Rhode Island suffered the common fate of those who are resolved on hospitality. It found that hospitality at times abused, and it became in its first days a refuge for able but erratic men. Quaintly, Winthrop writes, "In Providence also the devil was not idle." Hither came from Massachusetts and England the restless spirits who could not abide established forms of any kind. Rhode Island became to Massachusetts what Holland was to Spain. Anne Hutchinson, being tried for heresy and banished, found a peaceful home by Narragansett Bay. Samuel Gorton, whom we should

now call an anarchist, was described by Roger Williams as "having abused high and low at Aquedneck [that is Newport], bewitching and madding poor Providence." John Clarke and William Coddington, whose antinomian views rendered them intolerable in the northern colony, were kindly received at Narragansett Bay. But communities composed of so divers and inharmonious elements found it exceedingly difficult to co-operate in any form of government. The four towns, Providence, Warwick, Newport, and Portsmouth, were frequently at swords' points; and the strong, energetic personalities that Rhode Island had welcomed across her borders sometimes uttered discordant notes that threatened utterly to make the music mute. But no abuses could make Roger Williams repudiate his fundamental principles, no unhappy results could drive him from his position. In his "Bloudy Tenent of Persecution" he had fully expounded his own doctrine; and now, in his "Parable of the Ship," he explained its application to civil affairs. When told that his principles would not permit magistrates to enforce any law, he replied with this parable: —

"There goes many a ship to sea, with many hundred souls in one ship, whose weal or woe is common, and is a true picture of a common-

wealth or a human combination of society. It hath fallen out sometimes that both Papists and Protestants, Jews and Turks, may be embarked into one ship, upon which supposal I do affirm that all the liberty of conscience that I ever pleaded for turns on these two hinges, that none of the Papists, Protestants, Jews, or Turks, be forced to come to the ship's prayers or worship, if they practise any. I further add that I never denied that, notwithstanding this liberty, the commander of the ship ought to command the ship's course, yea, and also to command that justice, peace, and sobriety be kept and practised, both among the shipmen and all the passengers. If any one of the seamen refuse to perform their services, or passengers pay their freight, if any refuse to help in person or in purse toward the common charge and defence, if any refuse to obey the common laws and orders of the ship, concerning their common peace or preservation, and if any shall mutiny and rise against their commanders and officers, if any should preach or write that there ought to be no commanding officers, because all are equal in Christ, therefore no masters, no officers, no laws, nor corrections, nor punishment, I say I never denied, but in such cases whatever is pretended, the commander or commanders may judge, resist, compel, and

punish such transgressors to their deserts and merits."

John Stuart Mill or W. E. H. Lecky could not more lucidly and cogently express the essential doctrine of civil liberty and the essential principle of true democracy. Thus at the head of Narragansett Bay soul-liberty led straight into democracy. The "refuge for distressed consciences" became the nursery of the civil liberty, and the defender of faith became the asserter of the rights of man. No other colony went as far as Rhode Island in proclaiming religious freedom. The "Toleration Act" of Maryland offered full rights to every believer in the Trinity: Rhode Island offered them to all. Pennsylvania would not allow Deist or Jew to hold office. But from the beginning Rhode Island offered to all sorts and conditions of men asylum and welcome. When the first charter was procured in 1642, it contained no reference to any power over religious faith. Henceforth the problem of the colony was to reconcile extreme individualism with social and political co-operation. The conflict of these two principles is the history of the State. In Massachusetts the laws had to be modified to create liberty. In Rhode Island, liberty had to be defined and directed in order to establish law. Rhode Island was the

first of the colonies to legislate against slavery, and the first to declare independence of Great Britain,— in May, 1776. For the same reason it was the last to adopt the Federal Constitution, giving at last its consent by a vote of 34 to 32, and attaching to its consent a bill of rights consisting of eighteen articles and twenty-one proposed amendments to the Constitution.

Out of the spirit incarnated by Roger Williams, and expressed in Rhode Island, came the remarkable charter of Brown University in 1764, which contains only two provisions regarding the character of the instruction to be offered. First, "that the Public Teaching shall in General Respect the Sciences,"— this in an age when modern science was struggling to the birth. Secondly, after providing that each of the chief religious denominations then existing in America should hold place on the Corporation, this significant declaration was made: "Into this Liberal and Catholic Institution shall never be admitted any Religious Tests, but on the contrary all the Members hereof shall forever enjoy full free Absolute and uninterrupted Liberty of Conscience." Not till ninety years later was any dissenter admitted to Oxford or to Cambridge University.

It is time for us to say a word regarding the temper and disposition of the man whose doctrine

we have studied. Seldom have dignity of manner and sweetness of temper been so combined with relentless logic and inflexible tenacity of purpose. If Cotton called him a "haberdasher of small questions," yet the same Cotton loved him as a brother. If Bradford spoke of him as "unsettled in judgment," he yet described him as having "many precious parts." Edward Winslow opposed him, but spoke of his "lovely carriage." Roger Williams loved peace, but was forced to fight. He was a wanderer for conscience' sake, but ever longed for home. No controversy could imbitter him, no ecclesiastical opposition involve him in personal enmity. He saved Massachusetts time and again from the Indians. He fought the hierarchy while sending them letters of personal affection. He replied to the severe strictures of John Cotton with sharp rhetoric, yet began, "I desire that my rejoinder shall be as full of love as truth." His imagination is like that of Jonathan Edwards. His speech overflows with striking metaphor or quaint conceit. An old Puritan chronicler writes (quoted by Cobb): "This child of Light walked in Darkness about forty years, . . . yet did not his root turn into rottenness. The Root of the Matter abode in him."

At the age of seventy-eight we find the apostle

of Rhode Island feeble, broken, poor, but still serene, and bating not a jot of heart or hope. He was buried near the clear spring where he first landed. The spring now flows underground, buried and forgotten; but from his life issues an unfailing contribution to the freedom and happiness of humanity.

If what we have said be true, you will perceive that the personality and principles of Roger Williams possess far more than an antiquarian interest. Eternal vigilance will be the price of our liberty. Continually to-day we need to apply the old doctrine to the modern life. Whenever governmental support of denominational teaching is urged or offered, then the spirit of Roger Williams should awake in us to protest. If it can be shown that exemption from taxation allowed the smallest right of control, then such exemption should rightly be declined by every church. The expansion of the United States which is now taking place, whether for weal or woe, will constantly bring before this nation great problems which will never be settled until they are settled right; that is, until they are settled on the basis of the teaching of Roger Williams. The application of that teaching must be made afresh from year to year, but the principle itself must never be called in question by Americans. Whenever in modern

times the law of evolution is so misinterpreted as to invalidate the laws of ethics, whenever the "survival of the fittest" is supposed to mean the survival of the strongest, when supposed necessity or alleged profit is made the excuse for depriving another man or another nation of its liberty, then the spirit of Roger Williams should be summoned from the vasty deep, that it may speak in trumpet tones to recall us to ourselves. This apostle of liberty denied two hundred and fifty years ago that "Christian kings, so called, are invested with a right by virtue of their Christianity to take and give away the lands and countries of other men." He was persistently against every interference with self-government, home rule, and liberty for all sorts and conditions of men. He preferred Democracy, with all its perils, to the assumption of Divine Right, with all its hateful splendor.

We need also to exalt the principles of Roger Williams whenever in our day the claims of the individual are in danger of being ignored. A century ago the word "independence" was a word to conjure with. Now it awakens little enthusiasm: interdependence is the great truth in which men are now interested; and society is frequently treated as an organism, in whose mighty development the individual is over-

shadowed and forgotten. The brotherhood of man, the amelioration of humanity, the federation of the world, the progress of the species, are phrases on all our lips, and concepts which catch and hold the public mind. We live in the day of combination and consolidation, when isolation is defeat, and division is frequently death. The ends of the world are growing together, and the progress of the race is accelerated to an amazing degree. But we must remember that the value of the brotherhood of man depends on the individuals who make up the brotherhood. The progress of the species is impossible apart from the progress of the units composing the species; the success of federation depends on having real men to federate; and the advance of humanity is a dream, apart from the advance of separate individual men and women. The millennium will not come by paper programmes or acts of Congress. It will come by the millennial spirit of freedom and loyalty, by the love of liberty and faith in law arising in the heart of one man, and then communicating themselves to millions of others, as echoes that grow forever and forever.

Let us learn also to tolerate the man of vision, even if he be clothed in camel's hair, and insist on eating wild honey. They that live delicately

in kings' houses may be far more congenial companions at modern social functions; but the men whose voices ring out among the crags of the wilderness are, after all, the true forerunners of the Messiah. "Behold, this dreamer cometh," said Joseph's brethren scornfully; but, until the man of the dream does come, the man with a hoe, the man with a purse, and the man with a pen sit helpless and useless.

The men who disturb the smooth surface of life are often divinely sent. Some bless the world by aiding in its harmonious development. They quietly co-operate with the general tendency of society, and help it onward. Other men help the world by challenging social custom, by reopening questions the world has thought of as settled, and by summoning their day and generation to open their minds to new light. For these men also let us have a welcome. If we kill the prophets to-day, we shall sadly and penitently build their tombs to-morrow. Uncertainty is always the mother of intolerance. The men who are sure of their own convictions can always afford to listen to the man whose convictions are different. As James Russell Lowell says, "The universe of God is fire-proof, and it is quite safe to strike a match." Roger Williams did strike a few matches in Providence Planta-

tions two and a half centuries ago, and the conflagration which threatened to consume Massachusetts has turned out only to be the lighting of a flame now cherished on all the hearthstones of the republic. Therefore we do well, from time to time, to preserve in speech and song and legal record, and in memorials of marble and bronze, the name and fame of the founder of Rhode Island; for in the wise and balanced words of John Fiske, "He was the first to conceive thoroughly, and carry out consistently, in the face of strong opposition, a theory of religious liberty broad enough to win assent and approval from advanced thinkers of the present day."

# III

## Thomas Hooker and the Principle of Congregational Independency

# THOMAS HOOKER AND THE PRINCIPLE OF CONGREGATIONAL INDEPENDENCY.

While no period of history can be wholly devoid of interest to those whose lives fall within its bounds, the story of human progress has been one of varying picturesqueness and, we must believe, of unlike attractiveness to the successive actors in its changing scenes. The path of events, like the roadway across some vast continent, has its alternations of arid stretches, of humdrum levels, of mountain ranges of struggle and of far-sighted inspiration. To have lived in an age which witnessed the discovery of a new world, with its infinite possibilities of adventure, which opened the sea route to the Orient, which altered educational methods, and, above all, witnessed the great Lutheran revolt, seems to us vastly more significant than to have had one's allotted span of existence in the obscurity of Anglo-Saxon England, or even in the artificiality of the first half of the eighteenth century. Not a few of the generation to which the speaker belongs feel a pang of regret that they can know only from the lips of others the struggles and aspirations and hopes of that wonderful period in our New England story which began with the re-

formatory movements of the early thirties of the nineteenth century and spent itself in the fever of the Civil War. Doubtless the more personal events of business and family and community life, which count for so little on the great roll of history, but loom so momentously in our individual experience, make most of concern in the estimate of the greater part of the men and women of any age; but one can but believe it to have been a privilege to have lived when the Renaissance burst the shackles of the Middle Ages, when England saw the peril of the Armada ebb from her shores, when France entered on the high hopes of the Revolution, or when American independence was won.

For most men, however, acquaintance with the more stirring and picturesque of the events of history must be through the recorded experience of others,— if possible, of others who had an important rôle on the great stage of human events; and we shall therefore try to see a significant epoch of Anglo-Saxon development as it is illustrated in the story of one of its typical leaders,— Thomas Hooker.

If one glances at the map of England, one sees in almost its exact geographical centre the county of Leicester. The region is one of fertile farming land and of wide landscapes. And in the little

Leicestershire village of Marfield, then numbering six houses and now counting but five, it was that Thomas Hooker was born, probably in 1586, and possibly on the 7th of July. Of his parents little has been recorded. His father bore the same Christian name; and the family position was honorable, as social rank was then estimated. But, in spite of Cotton Mather's statement that the parents "were neither unable nor unwilling to bestow upon him a liberal education," their pecuniary ability was apparently limited; and young Hooker's mental training seems to have been made largely possible by the use of funds and fellowships established by those who had sought to make the paths of learning easier for needy young men. His first scholastic training, beyond the rudimentary instruction in his own home, was gained at a school founded by Sir Wolstan Dixie at Market-Bosworth, in which, more than a century later, Dr. Samuel Johnson was to be an "usher." From the instruction afforded by Market-Bosworth he passed in due course to the University of Cambridge, being matriculated a "sizar," or student-waiter, of Queen's College on March 27, 1604, when not quite eighteen years of age. From Queen's College he passed to the more comfortable enjoyment of one of the two Wolstan Dixie fellow-

ships at Emmanuel College; and there he graduated a Bachelor of Arts in 1608, and received the Master's degree in 1611.

To become a student at Emmanuel College in the early years of the reign of James I. was to be initiated into the most strenuous circles of English Puritanism. Beyond any other foundation at the prevailingly Puritan University of which it was one of the colleges, Emmanuel had been devoted to the Puritan cause since its establishment by a zealous Puritan courtier of Queen Elizabeth, Sir Walter Mildmay, in 1584. Its services in training the founders of New England were to be conspicuous; for it bears upon its roll of graduates, besides the name of Hooker, those of John Cotton, Samuel Stone, Thomas Shepard, John Harvard, and Nathaniel Ward, not to speak of others destined to be of eminent use in the Puritan colonies across the Atlantic. It stood in the forefront of the Puritan battle; and in its simplicity of public worship, its zeal for preaching, its hearty support of the intense Calvinism characteristic of Puritanism generally, and its strenuous desire to alter the constitution of the Church of England once more in conformity with the ideals which Calvinistic Puritanism gathered from the study of the New Testament, it represented in its intensest form the spirit of

the Puritan party. So pronounced, indeed, was the Puritanism of Emmanuel College, under the mastership of Laurence Chaderton and his eminent successor, John Preston, that it was regarded "as neither more nor less than a mere nursery of Puritans"; and its services to the Puritan cause were such as to make the designation eminently just.

The struggle, into the heat of which the young Cambridge student was thus thrown, was one which had been dividing England with increasing bitterness for two generations. It was a contest of principles rather than of mere parties in the Church; and, being a contest of principles, it penetrated deeply and divisively into the national life. At the time of the accession of Queen Elizabeth, nearly a generation before Hooker's birth, probably not more than a third of the population were Protestant at heart. The situation which the great queen encountered was one of exceeding difficulty. Opposed by the Catholic powers of Europe and declared without title to her royal authority, her heir, Mary Queen of Scots, an adherent of the Roman communion, and her own subjects divided in their allegiance, the situation was one not merely of great peril for the stability of her own throne, but one, also, in which the land she ruled might easily become

prey to civil war, as was the fate contemporaneously of the neighboring kingdom of France. That such a result was avoided was no mean political achievement, but it was avoided at the expense of what was thought by the more earnest of the Protestant party of England a serious check to the religious interests of the kingdom. To the queen herself it seemed sufficient to secure uniformity of worship and submission to her own ecclesiastical authority. To inquire much further than that into the real beliefs or the pastoral fitness of the clergy who had been swept in a body from the Roman obedience into the new Anglican fellowship was unnecessary; and to agitate for any further reforms in the ecclesiastical constitution, especially for any reforms that would limit the royal authority or increase the danger of civil discord by antagonizing any considerable portion of the population, was, in her judgment, practically equivalent to treason against her sovereignty.

Nor were matters really bettered when James I. succeeded to the throne made vacant by Elizabeth's death in 1603. Trained in Presbyterianism, and himself a vigorous and polemic defender of the Calvinistic theology, the party desirous of the further reform of the English Church hoped much from him; but their expectations suffered

speedy disappointment. He declared to the Puritan representatives who presented their requests to him at the Hampton Conference in 1604, regarding those who desired to alter the worship of the English Church, "I shall make thē conforme themselues, or I wil harrie them out of the land, or else doe worse." "No bishop, no king," was the "short aphorisme" in which James expressed his approval of the English establishment as it had come to him from the hands of the great queen. With this hearty commendation of the ecclesiastical system of which he was the head and controlling authority, James combined the loftiest conceptions of the divinely appointed nature of his kingly power. To be responsible to his subjects, either for the religious or the political administration of his realm, was as far as possible from his thoughts; and his conduct, both in Church and State, was such as to anger and to alienate those of his subjects alike who looked for further churchly reform and for constitutional government. Thus he quarrelled with the commons as to whether they had the right to discuss questions of Church and State. He irritated the Puritans no less by prescribing the reading of a book of sports in 1618, which, however well intentioned on the king's part, seemed to them a direct incitement

to the breach of the Fourth Commandment; and by denying to any one lower in ecclesiastical station than the occupant of the high position of a dean the right to discuss in public those Calvinistic doctrines of election, predestination, and the mysterious ways of God which seemed to the Puritan party the doctrines of grace, and to be fundamentally necessary for a true presentation of the way of salvation. And, when James I. closed his life in 1625, the situation, so far as the hope of further reform in the English Church or State was concerned, was made worse rather than better by the accession of his son Charles I. More polished in manner and more tactful in address than his father had ever been, his conceptions of the royal authority were fully as lofty, and his determination to suppress all innovations in ecclesiastical procedure quite as strenuous. In this policy, in Church and State alike, he had, moreover, the counsel and support of one who was in himself the illustration of what was best and worst in the high Anglicanism which the king represented,— William Laud, a prelate fiercely determined to enforce ecclesiastical uniformity throughout the length and breadth of the kingdom, because he sincerely believed that such absolute suppression of dissent was for the best interests of the English Church.

In almost polar opposition to these principles which Elizabeth and the Stuart sovereigns represented, and which enjoyed the support of a large proportion of the people of England, stood the Puritan party. Thorough-going in its Protestantism, it believed that the Elizabethan settlement was but a half-completed reformation at best, and that it was the duty of the government to alter the much altered Church of England once more into completer conformity with the pattern of what the Christian Church should be, as the Puritans thought they discovered that pattern in the New Testament, under the light that came to them from the expositions of the great theologian of Geneva. Above all, Puritanism was an ethical power. It desired the moral betterment of the people of England; and it regarded the toleration in the Church of an ignorant, non-preaching, unstrenuous clergy, however politically expedient such toleration might be, as nothing less than a deprivation of religious privilege which demanded immediate reform. Puritanism desired a learned, earnest, preaching ministry, and a vigorous, searching moral discipline; and it viewed the royal power and the royally appointed bishops who kept in office clergymen whom Puritanism regarded as unfit to be spiritual leaders as the main hindrances to

the reform of the Church of England, which Puritanism desired to see accomplished.

It was natural, trained as the leaders of Puritanism were, under influences which emanated from Calvin, that their interpretation both of Christian truth and of church government ran in lines which the Genevan reformer had marked out; and it was fortunate for English liberty that such was the case, for, though Calvin himself was by nature an aristocrat, and though his ecclesiastical rule at Geneva was marked by an interference with the individual life of the inhabitants of that city which we should now deem tyranny, his influence on the existing state of religious and political thought alike was one which made for constitutional liberty and which demanded for the people some share in the government. Calvin was not, in intention, a political innovator. His work, in his own thought at least, was purely a religious one; but the lessons that he taught to Western Europe were of a wide-reaching importance, no less in the realm of politics than in that of church organization. Calvin taught that no law of man is right, by whomsoever enacted, till it is in conformity with the law of God. Who was to tell what that law of God is to which conformity is due save the common man as he read his Bible with his own eyes and tried to interpret the stat-

utes of the government under which he lived in conformity with what he understood to be divine requirements? Calvin taught thus to all thinking men who accepted his view of Christian truth that there is a further test to be applied to any statute enacted by king or parliament than the mere fact that it has proceeded from such humanly constituted authority. It must justify itself as true, also, to the divine law, when tested by the judgment of the common man. This was a doctrine with which the Tudor and Stuart theory of the divine right of kings could have no fellowship.

Furthermore, Calvin taught the Puritan that the minister served his congregation by its consent; that that congregation had a voice in his election; and the conclusion was a natural consequence of his principle that in some sense, indefinite it may be, the minister was responsible to the congregation that he served, and could be deposed by it if guilty of maladministration of his office. This doctrine, equally, had no fellowship with the Tudor and Stuart conception of the Church as having its centre of authority in the sovereign, as ruled by bishops of his appointment, and as ministered to by priests in whose selection their congregations had no share. And, as it is impossible to disassociate the principles

which govern men's thinking in matters of church organization from those which control them in political affairs, the Puritan soon queried why, if ministers were responsible to the congregations that they served, might not officers of civil government, even kings on their thrones, be answerable to the people for a proper administration of the trusts committed to them? It was a perception of the far-reaching consequences of these fundamental diversities of conviction, quite as much as any mere question of ecclesiastical organization or of ritual, important as those matters were then regarded, which nerved the Puritan and his opponent alike in their long struggle. King James well expressed his sense of the irreconcilable antagonism of the two points of view when he declared, regarding Scottish Presbyterianism, in terms equally applicable to Puritanism, that it "as wel agreeth with a Monarchy"—as a Stuart king conceived monarchy should be—"as God and the Deuill."

Hooker's stay at Cambridge initiated him fully into the Puritan side of this great controversy, if he had not been a Puritan from the beginning of his intellectual life; and he made the principles for which the Puritan party stood fully his own. But his university years brought to him another and more intimate experience, the sense of which

vivified and quickened his own personal piety thereafter, and, since it did not a little to determine the peculiar shade of his theology and the emphasis of his preaching, is of much importance in any consideration of his life. That experience was his conversion. It was through the gateway of intensest spiritual struggle, as was natural to the Puritans of his day, that Hooker believed that he came into the kingdom of God; but this struggle had an agony and strenuousness exceeding that of Puritanism in general, convinced as Puritanism was that salvation is an extremely difficult matter. It has been customary to attribute to that sombre theologian of Newport, Samuel Hopkins, the belief that no man could be fully a Christian until he was so willing to place himself at the divine disposal as to accept without rebellion whatever disposal God should see fit to make of him, even if the divine purpose should involve his damnation. This was the rigorous and, to most Christian people, abhorrent test to which Hooker held himself in his own conversion, and in his preaching ever afterwards held up to others as the fundamental prerequisite of a true Christian hope. One cannot wonder that Hooker pictured this trying passage in his personal history as the "time of his agonies," or that he took comfort in what Cotton

Mather describes as the "prudent and piteous carriage" of Simeon Ashe, afterwards an eminent Puritan divine, but who was brought into relations with Hooker in this time of spiritual trial as the "sizar that then waited upon him," and whose sympathetic compassion touched Hooker's burdened heart.

At precisely what point in his university career this profound religious experience occurred it is, perhaps, impossible to say; but it was followed by a determination on Hooker's part to enter the ministry. During the latter part of his residence at Cambridge he served as a catechist and preacher; and between 1618 and 1620 he was appointed to the rectorship of Esher, a village some sixteen miles south-west of London. The moving cause which induced Hooker to accept this modest position, with its salary of only £40 a year, seems to have been the fact that the Esher rectorship was directly in the gift of a Puritan patron, and did not require the intervention of a bishop for its reception; and it was the hope that Hooker's ministrations might be of benefit to his invalid and spiritually distressed wife that induced the patron of Esher, Francis Drake, a relative of the English sailor of Elizabeth's reign, to offer the living to the young Cambridge graduate. Here Hooker preached until 1626, and

here he married Mrs. Drake's "waiting-woman," Susanna, whose family name is not known, but who, there is evidence to prove, was highly regarded in the household in which she was a companion. That the union thus formed, which continued as long as Hooker lived, was one of mutual helpfulness and affection, we may well believe; but regarding Mrs. Hooker's personality, or her influence upon the life of her husband or of others, scarcely any trace has been recorded.

Hooker's pastorate at Esher was exchanged in 1626 for a post of much greater conspicuity, when he became lecturer at Chelmsford, some twenty-nine miles east of London. The position which he thus assumed was one of the characteristic devices of Puritanism, in order to secure a more efficient ministry than the regular incumbent of the parish always afforded. Side by side with the duly installed rector, Puritan benevolence, in many towns, supported a "lecturer" who would preach as Puritanism desired; and as a divisive element in ecclesiastical life, efficient in the propagation of that Puritanism which Laud and his Stuart sovereign alike opposed, the lectureship system won the hearty condemnation of the Anglican party, and found in Laud himself its most efficient, conscientious, and active enemy. Hooker's preaching, more-

over, both at Esher and in his Chelmsford ministry, in spite of the royal prohibition of the public discussion of Calvinistic doctrines to which allusion has already been made, was of intensely Calvinistic character. Much of it bore the stamp of the deep and searching struggle through which he had passed in his conversion; and the volumes in which his sermons of this period and of his early New England ministry have been preserved bear such titles as "The Poor Dovting Christian drawne vnto Christ," "The Sovles Preparation for Christ," or "The Sovles Humiliation."

Of his great repute as a preacher there can be no question; and a single quotation from one of these sermons will illustrate alike the characteristics of Hooker's pulpit style and the degree to which he made his own religious experience a touchstone to test the truth of that of others. He is speaking of conversion: —

> Now I come to this last passage in this worke of Humiliation, and this is the dead lift of all. The Prodigall doth not stand it out with his Father and say, I am now come againe, if I may have halfe the rule in the Family, I am content to live with you. No, though hee would not stay there before, yet now hee cannot be kept out, hee is content to bee anything. . . . Lord (saith he) shew me mercy, and I am content to be, and to suffer anything. So from hence the Doctrine

is this. The Soule that is truly humbled, is content to be disposed of by the Almightie, as it pleaseth him. The maine pitch of this point lyes in the word, content. This phrase is a higher pitch than the former of submission: and this is plaine by this example. Take a debtor, who hath used all meanes to avoyd the creditor: in the end he seeth that hee cannot avoyd the suit, and to beare it hee is not able. Therefore the onely way is to come in, and yeeld himselfe into his creditors hands; where there is nothing, the King must loose his right; so the debtor yeelds himselfe: but suppose the creditor should use him hardly, exact the uttermost, and throw him into prison. Now to bee content to under-goe the hardest dealing, it is a hard matter: this is a further degree than the offering himselfe. So, when the Soule hath offered himselfe, and he seeth that Gods writs are out against him, and his Conscience (the Lords Serjeant) is comming to serve a *Subpæna* on him, and it is not able to avoyd it, nor to beare it when he comes, therefore he submits himselfe and saith, Lord, whither shall I goe, thy anger is heavy and unavoydable; Nay, whatsoever God requires, the Soule layes his hand upon his mouth, and goes away contented and well satisfied, and it hath nothing to say against the Lord.

Here are illustrated the qualities which stand evident on every page of Hooker's printed discourses,— his aptness in homely illustration, his vividness of description, his intense spiritual earnestness, and his conception of the profound

and fundamental character of the transformation by which alone he believed the soul could be fitted for the kingdom of God. A preacher such as he must have commanded attention to his message always, whether men agreed with him or not; and we have ample evidence of the effectiveness with which he encountered, and not infrequently overcame, the opposition of those indifferent or hostile to what he had to say.

A single, and we may hope, an extreme instance alike of this opposition and of his skill in meeting it is recorded by Cotton Mather as having taken place on one of Hooker's visits to the town from which his native county of Leicester takes its name.

"One of the chief burgesses," says Mather, "much opposed his preaching there; and when he could not prevail to hinder it, he set certain *fiddlers* at work to disturb him in the church-porch or church-yard. But such was the vivacity of Mr. Hooker, as to proceed in what he was about, without either the dampning of his mind, or the drowning of his *voice;* whereupon the man himself went unto the church-door to overhear what he said. It pleased God so to accompany some words uttered by Mr. Hooker, as thereby to procure, first the *attention* and then the *conviction* of that wretched man; who then came to Mr.

Hooker with a penitent confession of his wickedness."

The very conspicuity and effectiveness of this Chelmsford ministry drew upon it the more promptly the criticism of those who opposed the system of Puritan lectureships; and before a year had passed after Laud had become bishop of London, and thus Hooker's immediate ecclesiastical superior, the Chelmsford lecturer felt the hand of churchly discipline. The neighboring clergy of the establishment soon after ranged themselves for and against him, some forty-nine signing a petition in Hooker's behalf, while forty-one in a similar way expressed their wish that Laud should "enforce these irregulars to conforme"; and so threatening grew the situation that, apparently, about the close of 1629, Hooker retired from his Chelmsford ministry, and found refuge in the neighboring village of Little Baddow, where he opened a school in his own house. Yet even here Laud regarded him as dangerous. Cited to appear before the High Commission Court in July, 1630, by the advice and assistance of his friends he escaped with much difficulty to Holland, and began the self-imposed exile from his native land which was to last, with one short interruption, till his death. In Holland, after a brief sojourn at Amsterdam, Hooker

became for about two years the colleague of John Forbes in the pastorate of the Scotch Church of Delft, and was then, for a few months, associated with the eminent William Ames in the care of the expatriated congregation worshipping in Rotterdam.

But, even before Hooker's flight to Holland, English Puritanism was beginning to look to a New England across the sea; and Hooker can have regarded his Dutch residence only in the light of a temporary refuge. Just what the course of negotiations between him and his former parishioners and admiring hearers was it is impossible to say; but it is evident that the renewal of pastoral relations in the New World with his English friends must have been determined upon before his residence in Holland had long continued, for we find a company of immigrants from Chelmsford and the neighboring Braintree and Colchester in Old England settled at Mount Wollaston, near the New England Boston, in 1632, and so identified with the absent Hooker as to be described contemporaneously by Governor Winthrop as "Mr. Hooker's company."

It was to join this waiting congregation that Hooker left Holland for England in 1633, and after a narrow escape from capture sailed on the "Griffin," with Rev. Samuel Stone, who was to

be his colleague during all his American ministerial career, John Cotton, already famous in English Puritan circles and to be yet more distinguished as the foremost minister of Massachusetts, and John Haynes, to be governor successively of Massachusetts and of Connecticut. And it must have been a kind of Puritan feast of preaching that the "Griffin" company enjoyed during the eight weeks' voyage, for Cotton Mather declares: "They had three sermons . . . for the most part every day: of Mr. Cotton in the morning, Mr. Hooker in the afternoon, Mr. Stone after supper in the evening."

Arrived in Boston on September 4, 1633, Hooker was settled, on October 11 following, as "pastor," with Stone as "teacher," over the waiting congregation, which meanwhile had removed from Mount Wollaston to what was then known as Newtown, but was speedily to be designated by the now familiar name of Cambridge. With such leaders as Hooker and Stone in its ministry and Haynes in its lay membership, the congregation worshipping at Cambridge might well contest with that at Boston, under the guidance of Cotton, Wilson, and Winthrop, the preeminence among the churches of early Massachusetts. Its influence was speedily felt, not merely in ecclesiastical, but in civil matters. Thus

Hooker was employed in 1633 and 1636, with Cotton, in adjusting differences between Dudley and Winthrop, and in 1635 in discussing with Roger Williams the opinions which that erratic and liberty-loving minister had advanced, and which the General Court looked upon with disfavor. The same year Haynes was chosen governor of the Massachusetts Colony. The Newtown company, whether ministers or laymen, were evidently taking a prominent part in New England affairs.

But for certain reasons, some of which are not as evident as might be wished, the company of which Hooker was the spiritual leader was dissatisfied with the location and environment in which they found themselves. As early as May, 1634, they were representing to the General Court of Massachusetts their lack of sufficient land and their desire for a widening of their boundaries or for permission to remove elsewhere. They were sending out men of their number to investigate the possibilities of the meadow lands along the Merrimack, and by the following July they were seriously contemplating removal to the banks of the Connecticut and were sending explorers thither. Such a situation of discontent was a serious disturbance of the colony, and, at the General Court in September

following, the whole "matter was debated divers days, and many reasons alleged pro and con. The principal reasons for their removal were, 1. Their want of accommodation for their cattle, so as they were not able to maintain their ministers, nor could receive any more of their friends to help them; and so it was alleged by Mr. Hooker, as a fundamental error, that towns were set so near each to other. 2. The fruitfulness and commodiousness of Connecticut, and the danger of having it possessed by others, Dutch or English. 3. The strong bent of their spirits to remove thither."

The two reasons first mentioned by Winthrop are readily comprehensible. The settlers of New England had the land hunger so characteristic of pioneer communities, and an extent of territory which now seems absurdly adequate may well have appeared unsatisfactory to them. The meadow lands which bordered the Connecticut certainly offered more fertile tracts for farming than the relatively sterile soil about Massachusetts Bay; and it was desirable, from the point of view of the interests of the Puritan colony, that neither the Dutch nor the men of Plymouth should have possession of so attractive and so adjacent a territory as the Connecticut valley. Yet these reasons by no means fully account for

the "strong bent of their spirits to remove," for these considerations might as well have applied to any other communities in the colony besides that at Newtown and its sympathizers in Dorchester and Watertown. The danger was common to all, and we cannot feel that the desire for enlargement was peculiar to the company of which Hooker was pastor.

Some deeper and further reasons must have had their influence in causing them to reach so momentous a decision as the determination to leave their newly erected houses and just cleared farms involved. What were these further reasons? Unfortunately, the evidence is not quite so ample as we could wish; yet I think that two grounds for this strong bent of their minds, besides those conspicuously described by Winthrop, are evident in the light of contemporary and subsequent evidence. One was, as Hubbard intimates, a certain degree of personal — we will not say jealousy — but rivalry, in popular estimate and leadership, between Cotton and Winthrop, on the one hand, and Hooker and Haynes, on the other. Without serious antagonism to their brethren of the Boston community, the Newtown company may well have felt that a further removal would give them greater independence in shaping their own affairs. And,

more important than this, there is reason to believe, in the light of later Connecticut practice, that a decided difference existed between these would-be emigrants and their associates who stayed behind in regard to so fundamental a matter as the conditions of the franchise, and, possibly even, some degree of dissent from Massachusetts strictness in admission to church membership. By a law passed by the Massachusetts General Court at its session in May, 1631, those admitted freemen after that time were required to be "members of some of the churches within the lymitts of the" Massachusetts Colony. No such restriction obtained in the little commonwealth which Hooker and his associates speedily planted on the banks of the Connecticut; and the inference is natural that the absence of such limitation there expressed a well-considered dissent of the Connecticut founders from the fundamental principles, in this respect, of their Massachusetts associates. To what extent this dissent involved ecclesiastical differences is much less evident; but a correspondent, writing to Rev. John Wilson, of Boston, as early as April, 1637, affirmed "that you [of Massachusetts] are so strict in admission of members to your church, that more then halfe are out of your church in all your congregations, & that Mr.

Hoker befor he went away preached against yt as one reports who hard him."

It seems clear, therefore, that no inconsiderable cause of this desire for removal to Connecticut, so strongly manifested by Hooker and his associates at the General Court in the autumn of 1634, was due to a real, if little openly proclaimed, want of sympathy with the intensity of the theocratic conceptions then governing the leaders of Massachusetts; and certainly, on the part of Hooker, as we shall have occasion to see, to a stronger and clearer conviction of democracy as the essential basis of government than they possessed.

The discussion at the General Court in September, 1634, resulted, however, in a temporary delay. The people of Newtown accepted an enlargement of their territories; but it was only a palliative, and by September of the following year enough settlers were in Connecticut to justify the Massachusetts General Court, held that month, in appointing a temporary constable for the preservation of good order among them. In the late spring of 1636 the main body of settlers, led by Hooker, Stone, and Haynes, made their way through the forest; and the early summer saw Hooker and his parishioners building their new homes at the spot which was soon to bear the name of Hartford.

It was not merely with the erection of new dwellings and the tillage of new fields that these settlers were speedily occupied. Though a commission was appointed by Massachusetts with temporary authority for their government, it was speedily discovered that they were without the bounds of the Massachusetts patent; and, therefore, without the fundamental constitution which that charter gave to the colony from which they had come forth. They were obliged to erect political institutions for themselves; and, though much of the technical skill shown in this constructive work may well be owing to the legal training of Roger Ludlow and the executive experience of John Haynes, the animating spirit of the new constitution was undoubtedly the democratic spirit of Hooker. A chance auditor of an address given by him at a Thursday lecture on May 31, 1638, before the General Court of the little colony, recorded in shorthand the declaration of principles which Hooker then set forth, and which, had it not been for the long-undeciphered notes of this hearer, would have remained unknown to us. Taking as his text the thirteenth verse of the first chapter of Deuteronomy, Hooker drew the following doctrines: —

"1. The choice of public magistrates belongs unto the people, by God's own allowance. II.

The privilege of election, which belongs to the people, therefore must not be exercised according to their humours, but according to the blessed will and law of God. III. They who have power to appoint officers and magistrates, it is in their power, also, to set the bounds and limitations of the power and place unto which they call them."

And he gives as the first of the "reasons" for these "doctrines" that "the foundation of authority is laid, in the free consent of the people."

Here, then, we have the declaration of Hooker's principles, which was to be embodied in January, 1639, in the fundamental laws or first constitution of Connecticut,— a basal compact which clearer and more fully than any political agreement heretofore formulated recognized the foundation of authority as existent in the people, and the officers of government as responsible to them. It was the first adequate and distinct enunciation of what might be called the fundamental political principle after which Puritanism had been groping through two generations of struggle on English soil, and which Puritanism as a whole was far from having attained,— the principle that a self-governing democracy is the proper basis of the State. Of the far-sighted soundness of Hooker's clear-visioned utterance and of the deep-seated and thorough-going char-

acter of his own democracy there can be no question. If it was for no other utterance than this, he deserves high place among the founders of New England.

Though Hooker was thus a moulding force in shaping the political foundations of Connecticut, his interests were, primarily, pastoral and religious rather than political. Indeed, we may truly say that the civil principles which seemed so clear to his keen-sighted vision were but the application to governmental affairs of truths which appeared to him formative in ecclesiastical organization. To quote the title given to this lecture, his conception of the foundation of government in the free consent of the people was but the transference to the realm of politics of his "Principle of Congregational Independency," or the self-governing power of a local Congregational church. Hooker's writings are, with one exception, sermons and collections of sermons, addressed, primarily, to the initiation and upbuilding of the Christian life, as his intense and emotional Puritanism understood that life to be. But that exception is a conspicuous one, and shows Hooker to have been no less eminent as an expounder of the principles of ecclesiastical government, as New England generally understood those principles, than as a pioneer in the

exposition of political truths which won far less general following in his day. The volume in which Hooker set forth what he deemed the fundamental basis of the Church is that entitled "A Survey of the Summe of Church-Discipline," and passed through many vicissitudes before it was finally published.

The outbreak of the great Civil War in England in 1642 was followed by the speedy abolition of Episcopacy by Parliament and the summons of the assembly of divines to meet at Westminster in July, 1643, to advise in the reorganization of the government of the English Church and the new formulation of its doctrine. Hooker, Cotton, and Davenport were invited by men of influence in the Parliamentary party, such as the Earl of Warwick who had known and befriended Hooker at Chelmsford, Lord Say and Sele, and Oliver Cromwell, to allow these friends to present their names for summons by Parliament to membership in that great assembly. Cotton and Davenport had inclined to go; but Hooker "liked not the business," and in a phrase which sounds characteristic of him, though recorded by Winthrop, "nor thought it any sufficient call for them to go three thousand miles to agree with three men." He clearly discerned the overwhelmingly Presbyterian

complexion of the Westminster Assembly and the hopeless minority in which he and his Congregational associates would be likely to find themselves, if members of it.

But the summons of that assembly raised the whole question of the proper organization of the Christian Church to an intensity of debate such as had not yet characterized England. Cotton, Davenport, and Mather on this side of the Atlantic set forth Congregational principles; while English Presbyterian Puritans and their Scottish fellow-believers, like Charles Herle, William Rathband, and Professor Samuel Rutherford, replied with a keen critique of the New England position. The controversy waxed so warm and seemed to the New England divines so important that the ministers assembled at Cambridge on July 1, 1645, examined and approved several answering treatises which had been prepared in refutation of these Presbyterian criticisms. One of these was Hooker's "Survey," in which the Hartford minister laboriously and minutely traversed the ground covered in the volume entitled "The Due Right of Presbyteries," which Samuel Rutherford, the vigorous professor of divinity at St. Andrew's, had put forth in 1644. The manuscript of this painstaking work started for England on that ship which sailed from New

Haven harbor one cold winter's day in January, 1646, and the otherwise unknown fate of which was believed to have been mysteriously signified in the strange mirage or apparition which was seen by the people of New Haven nearly two years and a half later, and formed so curious an episode in the story of early New England credulity. The manuscript thus lost, Hooker, after much hesitation, attempted to reproduce; and he was still engaged on the task at the time of his death, so that the form in which it was at last published by his friends, in 1648, was very imperfect. And this incompleteness, combined with the minuteness with which he attempts to refute Rutherford's involved argument, makes the volume exceedingly tedious reading. But the preface of the volume as it stands is evidently a copy of that originally prepared in 1645; and it contains one of the most luminous and compact expressions of Congregational principles to be found in the literature of early New England. Its language is technical, but its meaning is simple and clear.

*If* [says Hooker] *the Reader* shall demand how far this way of Church-proceeding receives approbation by any common concurrence amongst us; *I shall plainly and punctually expresse my self in a word of truth, in these following points*, viz.

Visible Saints are the only true and meet matter whereof a visible Church should be gathered, and confœderation is the form.

The Church as *Totum essentiale*, is, and may be, before Officers.

. . . Each Congregation compleatly constituted of all Officers, hath sufficient power in her self, to exercise the power of the keyes, and all Church discipline, in all the censures thereof.

Ordination is not before election.

There ought to be no ordination of a Minister at large, *Namely, such as should make him Pastour without a People.*

The election of the people hath an instrumentall causall vertue under Christ, to give an outward call unto an Officer.

Ordination is only a solemn installing of an Officer into the Office, unto which he was formerly called. . . .

Consociation of Churches should be used, as occasion doth require.

Such consociations and Synods have allowance to counsell and admonish other Churches, as the case may require. . . .

But they have no power to excommunicate. Nor do their constitutions binde formalitèr & juridicè.

To Hooker's thinking, therefore, a true church of Christ is a company of Christian people united to one another in the service of God by a voluntary covenant and under the spiritual over-

lordship of Christ. Such a congregation possesses full and complete authority to administer its own affairs, choose and ordain its own officers, and govern its members. We have here presented, in the clearest and most succinct form, that democratic conception of the self-governing independence of the local congregation characteristic of the founders of New England, but especially congenial to the democratic spirit of Hooker, and destined to be vastly influential in the development, not only of New England, but of American political and religious life. And, while we cannot claim for Hooker any such pre-eminence in the formation of Congregational polity as belongs to him in the assertion of principles of democratic civil government, he ranks with Cotton and Mather and Davenport as one of the great expounders of the characteristic religious polity of New England.

It is interesting to observe, however, that this man of power in the pulpit and of leadership in matters of State was as marked by kindness and wisdom in the conduct of the affairs of the church of which he was the pastor as by forcefulness and clearness in the exposition of problems of more public concern. Cotton Mather records of his relations to the congregation of his Hartford ministry that, "as for ecclesiastical

censures, he was very watchful to prevent all procedures unto them, as far as was consistent with the rules of our Lord; for which cause (except in grosser abominations) when offences happened he did his utmost that the notice thereof might be extended no further than it was when they were first laid before him; and having reconciled the offenders with sensible and convenient acknowledgements of their miscarriages, he would let the notice thereof be confined unto such as were aforehand therewith acquainted; and hence there was but one person admonished in and but one person excommunicated from, the Church of Hartford, in all the fourteen years that Mr. Hooker lived there."

It would have been fortunate for the early New England churches if all of their pastors had been as profound in their knowledge of human nature and as wise and charitable in their conduct of church affairs as this leader of Connecticut.

Hooker's pastorate at Hartford terminated by his death, after a brief illness, on July 7, 1647. The story recorded of his last hours may well be true, and, if so, seems characteristically illustrative of his humility of spirit.

"When one that stood weeping by the bedside said unto him, 'Sir, you are going to receive the reward of all your labors,' he replied, 'Brother,

I am going to receive mercy,'" — an expression typical, we may think, of this eminent Puritan's lowly estimate of himself and of his humble walk with the God who had seemed to him the greatest of all realities.

Hooker's friends and ministerial associates strove to express, in the halting and elaborate verses characteristic of the essentially unpoetic writings of early New England, their sense of the greatness of their loss and of the mental and spiritual stature of the one who had gone from them. Thus John Cotton of your own Boston tried to versify his lament: —

'Twas of *Genevahs* Worthies said, with wonder,
(Those Worthies Three:) *Farell* was wont to Thunder;
*Viret*, like Rain, on tender grasse to shower,
But *Calvin*, lively Oracles to pour.

All these in *Hookers* spirit did remain
A Sonne of Thunder, and a shower of Rain,
A pourer-forth of lively Oracles,
In saving souls, the summe of miracles.

Now blessed *Hooker*, thou art set on high,
Above the thanklesse world, and cloudy sky:
Doe thou of all thy labour reape the Crown,
Whilst we here reape the seed, which thou hast sowen.

We may well comprehend their sense of loss, and the feeling that it was like the shutting in

of the evening of a glorious day to see one and another of the leaders of New England pass from the scene of their labors. Men who had grown to their stature in a contest of national proportions in the old country and in the foundation of colonies beyond the ocean, they left no successors behind them of equal gifts and similar eminence. The more provincial, narrow, and prosaic New England of the second generation might well see in the departure of these great men of the earlier time the loss of a radiance and an honor which had illuminated the beginnings of New England life. But we, who are better able than they to trace the extent of our indebtedness to the founders of New England, when we recall the name of Thomas Hooker, cannot fail to pay our homage to the memory of one who so asserted the principles of democracy in civil affairs and of congregational self-government in the church as to influence permanently the development of the peculiar ideals for which New England has stood and has made significant in American life.

# IV

# William Penn and the Gospel of the Inner Light

# WILLIAM PENN AND THE GOSPEL OF THE INNER LIGHT.

The gospel of the Inner Light, the doctrine that God makes himself known directly to the souls of men everywhere and in all ages, was the final and highest word of the Puritan Reformation. It originated in a great, epoch-making spiritual experience, or group of spiritual experiences, in an age when life had largely departed from the established religious forms and spiritual darkness was heavy upon the people.

The principle had lain from the beginning enfolded in Christian teaching, and in all true Christian life, but without enunciation and interpretation. Indeed, it had lain at the heart of everything that deserved to be called religion, from the beginning of human thought about the invisible Author of the universe and of human reverence and worship. Serious men had always felt, and in measure realized, that God appeared to them within, however much, from custom and association, they tried to discover, or did discover, him without. But this truth, like every great truth, became a gospel of power for the liberation and enlargement of men's lives only when it was

articulately set forth by persons who had mastered its secret.

From the theological point of view the principle sprang as a corollary from the primary truth of the universal and impartial love of God as Father of the human race, which the early Friends vigorously maintained against the stiff and heartless predestinarianism of the time. Love is light, they saw and felt. The God who loved all men must of necessity communicate himself to the souls of all. The True Light, which came into the world as the supreme revelation of the character of God, must light every man, in measure, in all ages and all times. The historic manifestation was only the revelation in a special and superlative way of a process coeval with human society. Thus the first promulgators of the gospel of the Inner Light supported by simple but unanswerable theological judgments what they had realized in their own experience to be true.

It would be most interesting and instructive to examine critically the relations of the doctrine of the Inner Light to the historic Christ, to the conscience, and to the general philosophy of the Christian religion ; but the purposes and limits of this address do not permit the entrance of this field. We are to study to-day the part which this

truth has played in the establishment and development of religious liberty.

The first effect of a clear perception of the fact that God communicates himself directly to all human souls is a sense of the place and value of the individual personality. He to whom God speaks, whom God deems worthy to receive his direct messages, must have a high intrinsic worth, must be, potentially at least, a king by divine right within the domain of his own being. He must be his own priest, offer up his own sacrifices, do his own worshipping. However much he may resort to others for instruction and help, he must in the last appeal be his own interpreter of what he is to believe and follow.

Just here is found the primal secret of religious liberty, indeed of all liberty. Out of this experience of inner connection and communion with the Highest comes to all serious souls self-respect before God and man, the exaltation and supremacy of conscience, the purpose to realize one's own place and destiny, a fine sense of obligation to a life of godliness and manliness. The soul that realizes this high prerogative can admit of no lordship of men over it. It is to God alone that it bows in reverent and loving submission, and says, "Thy will be done." With the self-respect and the devotion to righteousness come courage

and endurance in the face of persecution and suffering, if these have to be met.

This secret of liberty and of earnest, patient, heroic effort for its attainment has been the common possession of all the prophets and martyrs of freedom, though realized less clearly and fully by some than by others. It inspired, directed and upheld the Pilgrims and, in somewhat less measure, the Puritans, as well as the Friends, both in the Old World and in the New, in their great moral struggle for liberty of self-directed worship. It was the guiding star of John Robinson, of William Brewster, of Thomas Hooker, and of Roger Williams, no less than of George Fox and of William Penn, though it did not lead them all equally far.

But the principle of the direct light of God in the human soul, the spiritual side of the now generally accepted doctrine of the divine immanence, had a still deeper effect upon the minds of those who felt the fulness of its power. It created intelligent, large-minded respect for others,— a much greater thing than self-respect,— and much more productive of freedom in its wider social and political aspects. Self-respect is not a very difficult accomplishment for thoughtful and sincere men: it grows with small nurture directly out of the elemental instincts of self-preservation

and self-expression. Respect for others, sincere and abiding, without which there can be no social liberty, is the most difficult of spiritual attainments.

It was just here that the doctrine of the Inner Light produced one of its finest fruits. If God reveals himself to the souls of other men besides one's self, in however dim a way, then these other men have the stamp of worthiness put upon them by the Most High himself. Whom God respects and treats in this high way as he treats me, I must respect as I respect myself. Whom God has cleansed I must not call common. I must leave him free to think, to respond to God in his own way. I must not put him into any spiritual bonds, for thereby I shall exalt myself above God and dishonor Him from whom my own light comes.

Respect for others which is born of this source knows no limit. Men may differ with me in thought as widely as the poles are apart: I shall still respect them. I shall uphold for them the liberty to think, and to speak as they think, as I claim these prerogatives for myself. They may be wicked and unworthy, and I may feel myself bound in duty to try to bring them back to the path of goodness; but even thus I shall employ only the high art of persuasion and reproof by

truth and love, and not the low art of compulsion by brute force and persecution. They may be my enemies, bitter and injurious; but even so I shall refuse to lower myself to hate and harm and enslave them, because of the common relation which they and I hold to God.

The Friends of the seventeenth century carried this principle of respect for others, so deeply involved in the principle of the Inner Light, to its logical conclusion. They granted to others without regard to creed what they claimed for themselves. Herein they differed from all other types of the Puritans, with rare exceptions, and went beyond all other leaders of the Reformation up to their time. The Puritans in general, in spite of the great stress which they laid upon the Bible as the supreme standard of faith and practice, believed in the direct communication of God with the soul,— at any rate, with their own souls. But they did not go far enough to see the wider aspects of this truth. The self-respect in which the principle issues they felt strongly, and were ready to undergo all sacrifices to attain personal liberty and liberty for those who believed as they did. But of genuine religious respect for others, for those of pronouncedly different religious conceptions, they knew little. They were not only not willing to undergo sacrifices and

sufferings for the sake of the liberty of other sectaries to think and speak as they thought, but they undertook, where they had the power, to compel by force conformity to their own tenets. They became persecutors, and did men and women to death for insisting on the same liberty of religious thought, interpretation and statement which they had suffered all manner of hardship to obtain for themselves.

The promulgators of the gospel of the Inner Light not only conceded liberty of thought and speech to others: they suffered and died for the spiritual rights and liberties of those of other beliefs as they did for their own. They never persecuted, or showed the least spirit of persecution, even when they had the power, as in the colonies of Pennsylvania and West Jersey. They did not retaliate against those who had maltreated them and sent many of their choicest members to prison and to death. They thus won for themselves and for humanity, on this high ground, one of the greatest victories of liberty — many think the greatest — ever gained, and left incorporated in our civilization — let us hope for all time — what is a commonplace to-day, namely, the principle of respect for the personalities, the intellectual and spiritual liberties, of other men than one's self. So accustomed are we

in this day to enjoy this priceless boon that it is difficult for us to credit the fact that at least one person died in prison for it every month during the entire reign of Charles I.

But the gospel of the Inner Light carried its apostles one final step further. They saw that the sharers in the directly communicated light of God were thereby treated as members of a common family. That is what gave the doctrine of universal brotherhood so profound a meaning to them, and made them its unwavering exponents and defenders when it had no other friends. Brotherhood, in their conception, was not a mere sentimental correlate of the Fatherhood of God, held as a philosophic theory. Its basis was deeper also than the likenesses everywhere observed among men and their dependences upon one another. Beyond all these grounds for treating their fellow-men as brethren they saw God himself conducting himself as a father toward them, as well as toward themselves, and doing this in the deepest and truest way. They saw him holding communion with them, enlightening, instructing, inspiring, guiding, supporting, comforting, as well as reproving and disciplining them with a father's faithfulness, patience, and wisdom. The brotherhood of men was thus to them a *practical divine kinship*,

founded in the active Fatherhood of God, to be cherished as sacredly as the relationships between the members of a true family.

The Friends were thus carried by their gospel of Inward Light into the most active manifestations of the spirit of brotherhood,— the effort to bring men to the realization of a life essentially divine, the uplifting of the down-trodden, the deliverance of those in bondage, the amelioration of the lot of prisoners and other unfortunates, universal religious liberty, the endeavor to secure for all equality of rights before the law. It was their *practice* of brotherhood, when they were persecuted as well as when they were left in the enjoyment of their rights, not their theories about it, that made their work from the middle to the close of the seventeenth century probably the greatest and most wide-reaching contribution to religious and civil liberty ever yet made. Only those who practise brotherhood can long hold any true theory of it or really promote it. These men filled the world with their doctrine of the ideal brotherhood of man, and by their practice of what they preached made it seem something more than the baseless fabric of a dream.

Of this group of men who made the gospel of the Inner Light a permanent part of all sub-

sequent religious thought, the most conspicuous in the practical application of its principles to social and political problems was William Penn, the stateliest, shapeliest, manliest figure of the second half of the seventeenth century, a man now always placed in the list of the few really great men of history.

Penn came upon the scene at a very critical time in the history of the development of religious freedom. The great wave of the Puritan Reformation had practically spent itself. All the prominent Puritan leaders — William Brewster, John Robinson, John Winthrop, John Cotton, Thomas Hooker, John Hampden, John Pym, John Milton, Oliver Cromwell, Sir Harry Vane — were gone. Roger Williams, the only other colonial leader, with the possible exception of Thomas Hooker, who went as far as William Penn in his advocacy of religious liberty, was worn out and dying. The Royalist party, with its high-handed monarchical proclivities and its unblushing corruptions, had been restored; and Charles II. and then his brother James dictated from the throne — or attempted to dictate — both the politics and the religion of the nation. Algernon Sidney had been banished, and was living in exile in Rome. It was the period of the infamous Jeffreys and his Bloody

Assizes. The party of pure religion and of popular rights, though strong among the masses, was for the time being submerged. Puritanism itself was degenerating into a hard-and-fast ecclesiasticism, and in its strife for political as well as religious ascendency was losing much of its original spirit and becoming intensely bigoted and intolerant. In New England it had only been saved from moral shipwreck at the hands of the clergymen and the magistrates by the influence of Roger Williams and his friends, and by the heroic treatment of a group of followers of the Inner Light, the remarkable voyage of whose "Mayflower," the "Woodhouse," is only less famous than that of the ship of the Pilgrims, because it was not the first to be made. The severe persecution of these men and women and the final martyrdom of a number of them created a reaction among the people, and ultimately restored to Massachusetts the spirit which had planted Plymouth Colony.

There is nothing in the whole scope of religious biography more interesting than the manner in which William Penn became a spiritually free man, an experience through which one must have passed himself before he can do anything effective for the freedom of others. Nearly everything in his inheritance and home surroundings

was of a nature to make him the pliant slave of circumstances. No man was ever less so. What he heard in the Puritan atmosphere at the school at Wanstead about civil liberty and the rights of Parliament doubtless had much influence with him, but it is entirely inadequate to account for the course which he took. That can only be explained as the result of the work of God within him. Born a Royalist, of a father who was a heavy drinker and a glutton, as well as a man of rough military life and habits, Penn had, on the one hand, a restless, impetuous, combative disposition, fond of dress and pleasure, ready to run the common course dictated by custom and self-interest. On the other hand, he was characterized by a thoughtful, contemplative, sincere, pure-minded, richly religious nature, on which the light of God fell as the rain and sunshine upon a deep, fertile soil.

The struggle in him between the earthy and the spiritual began at the early age of twelve and lasted for nearly a dozen years. He had at this age, while alone in his room, what he always believed to be a special visitation of God's spirit, which awakened all that was best in him, inspired and comforted him, made him feel that God was in direct communication with him, and that he was called to a holy life. The conflict through

which he passed till his twenty-third year was a very trying one. At Oxford, where he studied for three years, he was fined and then expelled from his college because he preferred Quaker meetings to the regular church services, and, as report has it, joined the Puritan students in tearing off the surplices from the Royalist boys. He was sent to France later, to cure him of his deepening religious tendencies. The court of Louis XIV., at which he was introduced, was then at the height of its brilliancy. Under the influence of the court and its surroundings he fell away from his best light into a life of pleasure and vanity, though never, he assures us, into impurity, profanity, or even vulgarity of speech.

Returning home a well-educated and polished young gentleman, well versed in theology,— which he had read at Saumur under the distinguished Moses Ameyrault,— his father set him to study law at Lincoln's Inn; but, observing during the time of the great plague that his son was turning again to a serious life, he put him into business and military positions, which, he thought, would prevent any return of his former religious ideas. But these were living in him, and had silently developed during his stay abroad.

At the age of twenty-three another special call came to him through the preaching of Thomas

Loe, a Friend whom he had heard at Oxford. This time his final decision was made, and he was henceforth a son of the Inner Light and a free man. His father protested, entreated, stormed, whipped him, beat him, turned him out of doors. But it was all in vain. Young Penn, with his face toward the sun, stood his ground, and entered at once upon that consecrated, divinely guided, earnest, steadfast, patient, benevolent life, which was to be so fruitful in the promotion of both religious and civil liberty to the people of his own and of subsequent times.

Penn's spiritual freedom, it may be remarked in passing, was of that rare kind which avoids asceticism and austerity, on the one hand, and every form of impurity and looseness, on the other. He relished, as occasion offered, all the lawful pleasures of life; but the corrupt, obscene, and disgustingly low manners and habits of people in high places, among whom he was so often cast at court and elsewhere, made not the least inroad upon the purity and loftiness of his soul. He walked in the light of God; and that light kept him clean and strong, and therefore free.

The fruit of the principles which had mastered his soul began at once to manifest itself. During the next fifteen years, which he spent in preaching

the new gospel and suffering for it, his work for religious freedom was as constant, brave and effective as was ever done in England. His high social standing and friendly connection with the royal family put him into a position of extraordinary influence; and this, though often exposing him to suspicion and vituperation, he never failed to use in behalf of the liberties of all his fellow-citizens, without regard to creed. He became, because of the unequalled depth and breadth of his conceptions, his impartial and incessant efforts and the faithfulness with which he used his position of commanding influence, the foremost of the seventeenth-century apostles of religious liberty.

When imprisoned himself, as he was several times, Penn addressed powerful appeals for liberty of conscience and civil freedom to those in authority. When out of prison, he did the same for others, Catholics as well as Protestants. In his letter to the Earl of Orrery, Lord President of Munster, on the occasion of his first imprisonment, he touched the great springs of all his future efforts for liberty,— the inalienable rights of conscience, the principles of English liberty as set forth in the Great Charter, and the evil effects to the State of religious intolerance. Imprisoned in the Tower for nine weary months on a charge of

blasphemy, because he had in one of his books criticised the crude tri-theism of the time, when told that the Bishop of London had determined that he should recant or die a prisoner, he replied: "My prison shall be my grave before I will budge a jot, for I owe my conscience to no mortal man. I have no need to fear: God will make amends for all. They are mistaken in me. I value not their threats and resolutions; for they shall know I can weary out their malice and peevishness, and in me shall they behold a resolution above fear, conscience above cruelty, and a baffle put to all their designs by the spirit of patience. . . . A hair of my head shall not fall without the providence of my Father that is over all." He did not budge a jot, nor did he die in prison, nor did a hair of his head fall.

The trial of William Penn and William Mead in 1670, while the Conventicle Act was in force, for speaking at a meeting in Grace Church Street, when they had been locked out of their own house of worship, was one of the most memorable in English history. It took place eighteen years before the famous trial of the seven bishops, described so graphically by Macaulay's brilliant pen. The victory for justice in which it resulted was also greater than that in the case of the bishops, because the matter at stake was not, as

in the latter, a mere question of supremacy between Protestant and Catholic, but the wider and deeper question of general religious toleration and universal civil rights against lawless bigotry and tyranny.

The trial was held at the Old Bailey. Penn's defence, which he conducted himself without counsel, was that the Conventicle Act, which he did not deny that he had broken, was in violation of the principles of the Great Charter. His knowledge of the law enabled him to take advantage of the errors and falsehoods of the indictment, which included the charge of taking part in a tumultuous and disorderly assembly. In spite of the most shameless attempts of the court to silence him, he stood his ground, and made a masterly defence of himself and companion.

When the jury brought in the verdict, "Guilty of speaking in Grace Church Street," the magistrates were furious, and ordered a new verdict. The jurymen went out, and immediately returned with the same verdict. It was again rejected by the court. Time after time, though brutally threatened and maltreated, these brave men came back with the same judgment. Two days and nights they were kept without bed or food or even water. When they came in for the last

time, they had changed the mock verdict into a real one,—"Not guilty." The magistrates were dumb with anger and amazement. The crowd in the court-room broke forth into excited demonstrations of approval. In their fury the magistrates fined both the prisoners and the jury for contempt of court. Penn strode forward to the bench, and in the name of the fundamental laws of England demanded his liberty in accordance with the verdict. It was denied him. Refusing to pay their fines, they were all committed to Newgate. The jury, following Penn's advice, brought suit against the mayor and recorder for false imprisonment. They carried the case to the Court of Common Pleas, and won. The judges declared unanimously that a jury had absolute freedom in rendering its verdict. It was a great victory for simple truth and justice, and did much to strengthen the foundations of the growing structure of English constitutional liberty.

Penn's written protests against religious persecution and pleas for civil and religious liberty were numerous, and among the most noble and effective in the whole history of English reform. They were in homely, unpolished Anglo-Saxon English; but they struck hard, and went straight to the heart of the matters dealt with. Memo-

rials to the High Court of Parliament, to the sheriffs of London, to justices and lords; his speeches before a committee of Parliament, and before King James on presenting an address of the Friends; his treatise on "The Great Case of Liberty of Conscience," in which he musters an array of historic example and precedent that reminds one of John Milton; his "Address to the Protestants of All Persuasions"; his tractate on "England's Present Interest"; his "Project for the Good of England"; his political manifesto on "England's Great Interest in the Choice of a New Parliament," in which he set forth the principles — fundamental for all time — in accordance with which the franchise should be used by free and honorable men,— all these are papers and treatises which, though in the antiquated language of the seventeenth century, might still be read with great profit, particularly in the none too saintly circles of modern politics. There are no two documents in all English political literature fuller of political wisdom than "The Great Case of Liberty of Conscience" and "England's Present Interest Considered."

Penn is usually supposed to have been a man of placid disposition, submitting passively to injustice, and never using vigorous and pungent speech in defence of justice and liberty. He was

nothing of the sort. He refused from principle to use any physical violence, and was as absolutely master of his spirit as any man who ever trod upon English soil. But "in deeds of daring rectitude" he was unsurpassed. His discarding of the weapons of brute force made him all the more bold and aggressive in the use of those of moral cast, as was the case with our leading anti-slavery reformers. None ever wielded the weapons of truth in defensive speech and in protest against wrong, where occasion demanded, with more naked directness and unsparing keenness than he. He knew not the meaning of fear. He was swift in offence wherever a stronghold of injustice towered before him.

In the trial at the Old Bailey, when the court was browbeating the jury, he exclaimed in manly indignation: "It is intolerable that my jury should be thus menaced. Is this according to the fundamental law? Are not they my proper judges by the Great Charter of England? What hope is there of ever having justice done, when juries are threatened and their verdict rejected?" When the recorder maliciously ordered him taken away, declaring that for such men as he something like the Spanish Inquisition ought to be established in England, Penn replied: "I can never urge the fundamental laws of England

but you cry, 'Take him away, take him away.' But 'tis no wonder, since the Spanish Inquisition hath so great a place in the recorder's heart. God Almighty, who is just, will judge you for all these things." Chided by Cavaliers for abandoning the society of gentlemen and associating with the despised Quakers, who were from among the common people, Penn's moral sense flashed back the retort: "I confess I have made it my choice to relinquish the company of those who are ingeniously wicked, to converse with those who are more honestly simple." In a letter to the vice-chancellor of Oxford University, by whom students inclined to Quakerism were treated with great contempt and severity, he wrote: "Shall the multiplied oppressions which thou continuest to heap upon innocent English people for their peaceable religious meetings pass unregarded by the eternal God? Dost thou think to escape his fierce wrath and dreadful vengeance for thy ungodly and illegal persecution of his poor children? I tell thee, no. Better were it for thee thou hadst never been born. Poor mushroom, wilt thou war against the Lord, and lift up thyself in battle against the Almighty?" In the "Great Case of Liberty of Conscience," written while he was a prisoner in the Tower as a political suspect, he declares that in trying to secure uni-

formity in religious belief "the way of force makes instead of an honest dissenter, but an hypocritical conformist, than whom nothing is more detestable to God and man." In "England's Present Interest Considered," a tractate inspired by the purest and loftiest patriotism, he utters a protest of rare power against the abuses and cruelties practised throughout the nation in the effort to bring about religious conformity, and pleads for toleration as the surest means of putting an end to the prevailing confusion and disorder. "Your endeavors for uniformity," he says, "have been many: your acts, not a few to enforce it. But the consequence, whether you intended it or no, through the barbarous practices of those who have had their execution, hath been the spoiling of several thousands of the free-born people of this kingdom of their unforfeited rights. Persons have been flung into gaol, gates and trunks broken open, goods distrained, till a stool hath not been left to sit down on; flocks of cattle driven off, whole barns full of corn seized, threshed, and carried away; parents left without their children, children without their parents, both without subsistence. But that which aggravates the cruelty is the widow's mite hath not escaped their hands: they have made her 'cow the forfeit-

ure of her conscience,' not leaving her a bed to lie on nor a blanket to cover her. And, which is yet more barbarous, and helps to make up this tragedy, the poor helpless orphan's milk, boiling over the fire, has been flung to the dogs, and the skillet made part of their prize."

The severest ordeal through which Penn had to pass in his work for religious liberty was that which befell him in his advocacy of toleration for Catholics as well as Protestants. The torture of soul which he experienced in this conflict, wherein for twenty years he was misrepresented and maligned as a scheming Catholic, a Jesuit, a hireling of the pope, was tenfold greater than any suffering which vile imprisonment or bodily abuse caused him. In these latter he gloried, in a high, triumphant spirit. He gave hard blows, and he knew how to take them. But to be treated as a consummate liar, an arch deceiver, a snake in the grass, cut his fine, sensitive, honorable soul to the very quick, and sometimes wrung from him expressions of a grief too keen and overmastering to be concealed. But he never flinched from the trying duty until he had done his work. Pleading before a committee of Parliament his case and that of his co-religionists under persecution as Papists, he said: "That which giveth me a more than

ordinary right to speak at this time and in this place is the great abuse that I have received above any other of my profession; for of a long time I have not only been supposed a Papist, but a Seminary, a Jesuit, an Emissary of Rome. . . . What with one thing and what with another, we have been as the common wool-sacks and common whipping-stock of the kingdom. All laws have been let loose upon us, as if the design were not to reform, but to destroy us, and that not for what we are, but for what we are not. It is hard that we must thus bear the stripes of another interest and be their proxy in punishment. . . . I would not be mistaken. I am far from thinking it fit that Papists should be whipt for their consciences, because I exclaim against the injustice of whipping Quakers for Papists. No; for, though the hand pretended to be lifted against them hath, I know not by what discretion, lit heavy upon us, and we complain, yet we do not mean that any should take a fresh aim at them, for we must give the liberty we ask, and cannot be false to our principles, though it were to relieve ourselves; for we have goodwill to all men, and would have none suffer for a truly sober and conscientious dissent on any hand."

More pathetic and, if possible, more noble

still is his language in reply to an urgent request from a particular friend to vindicate himself in a public statement against the calumnies which fell upon him from all sides on account of his frequent visits to James II. in behalf of universal toleration. I quote a few sentences from this remarkable but little known letter: —

"I am not only no Jesuit, but no Papist. And, which is more, I never had any temptation upon me to be it, either from doubts in my own mind about the way I profess, or from the discourses or writings of any of that religion. And, in the presence of Almighty God, I do declare that the King did never once, directly or indirectly, attack me or tempt me upon that subject, the many years that I have had the advantage of free access to him, so unjust as well as sordidly false are all those stories of the town. . . . I have almost continually had one business or other there for our Friends, whom I have served with a steady solicitation, through all times, since I was of their communion. I had also a great many personal good offices to do, upon a principle of charity, for people of all persuasions, thinking it a duty to improve the little interest I had for the good of those that needed it, especially the poor. . . . I am not without apprehensions of the cause of this behavior towards me, I mean my constant

zeal for an impartial liberty of conscience. But if that be it, the cause is too good to be in pain about. I ever understood that to be the natural right of all men, and that he that had a religion without it, that religion was none of his. For what is not the religion of a man's choice is the religion of him that imposes it. So that liberty of conscience is the first step to have a religion. . . . If, therefore, an universal charity, if the asserting an impartial liberty of conscience, if doing to others as one would be done by, and an open avowing and steady practising of these things in all times to all parties, will justly lay a man under the reflection of being a Jesuit or a Papist of any rank, I must not only submit to the character, but embrace it, too; and I care not who knows that I can wear it with more pleasure than it is possible for them with any justice to give it to me. For these are corner-stones and principles with me; and I am scandalized at all buildings that have them not for their foundations. For religion itself is an empty name without them, a whited wall, a painted sepulchre, no life or virtue to the soul, no good or example to one's neighbor. Let us not flatter ourselves. We can never be the better for our religion, if our neighbor be the worse for it. 'He that suffers his difference with his neighbor about the other world to

carry him beyond the line of moderation in this, is the worse for his opinion, though it be true.'"

This noble vindication, unsurpassed by anything in the language, ought to have silenced the tongue of calumny forever; but it did not. He was still hounded by enemies and arrested and brought to trial no less than three times afterward, until he was finally cleared of all blame by King William himself and by the King's Bench at Westminster.

This work of Penn in England for liberty of conscience, for universal religious toleration, and the equal and impartial rights of all before the common law, has been less heralded and less appreciated than his experiment in the New World. It ought not to have been so. The two were only different parts of the same service to the cause of liberty. What he did in England produced the training and laid the foundations for the American experiment, and was by all odds the more difficult and trying. What he did on the banks of the Delaware was simply to test in practice, with a comparatively free hand, the soundness and practicability of the doctrines whose advocacy had cost him so many years of thankless labor, social ostracism and relentless persecution on his native soil. It took, of

course, a political genius of the highest order to conceive and execute the American scheme. But it required, in addition to genius, a sustained moral heroism, unsurpassed in the annals of reform, to maintain for so many years the hard conflict by which he wrested from the English courts and government the recognition, for himself and for multitudes of others, of the simple rights of citizenship and of religion,— a victory whose benefits went to all English-speaking peoples.

It would be gratuitous to rehearse before a cultivated American audience the story of the founding and development of the colony of Pennsylvania, and of its extraordinary success, without soldier or armed policeman, for two whole generations of men. Nothing in the annals of the country is better known than this singular romance of our political history, more marvellous in its simple reality than any ideal republic of philosophy or any utopia of political dreaming.

Leaving aside, as not relevant to the purpose of this address, the phase of the experiment which has been most dwelt upon, that of the entire disuse of deadly weapons, it is difficult to say which of the other parts of it — the policy of justice and brotherhood toward the Indians,

that of universal religious toleration, and that of equality of rights in the government — was the most successful and the most influential in its ultimate effects on the nation after the colonial period was over.

The Indian policy, which was incomparably successful during the seventy years that it was continued, was finally abandoned by the colony, along with that of the disuse of arms. But it remained as an appealing ideal to the nation during more than "a century of dishonor," with its frightful Indian wars and enormous cost to the country. At last the government, weary of the bitter and costly fruits of the method of oppression and slaughter, found itself practically compelled, by considerations of self-interest and economy as well as of right, to adopt toward the Indians who remained what was substantially the policy of Penn. The results have again justified the method. Since the adoption of the peace policy under President Grant, Indian wars have ceased. The Indians are rapidly becoming civilized, and are being absorbed into the general population and life of the nation. Through it all Penn's influence has been beyond calculation, and it will continue to be mighty until the last Indian remaining becomes a citizen and enjoys all the rights and liberties of his white brother.

The policy of universal religious toleration — a better word than toleration ought to be used to describe it — that was adopted by the founder of Pennsylvania was immensely successful. Though tried for the first time in its full scope,— the experiment of Roger Williams having been not only much more limited, but much marred and broken by interference from abroad,— it worked just as Penn had often declared in England that it would work. People of every nation, tongue and creed of Western Europe flocked to the banks of the Delaware. They lived in mutual respect and harmony, and the colony grew and prospered beyond all the others. The effect of this bold, thorough-going, and measurably unhampered experiment in freedom of conscience and of religious polity was deep and wide-spread among all the colonial settlements. The policy finally worked its way, strengthened of course from many other sources, into the larger life of the nation, and became part and parcel of the controlling spirit of the American people, as we know it to-day.

Before leaving England, Penn drew up "The Fundamental Constitutions of Pennsylvania," and also a "frame of government," as he styled it, for the ordering of the new colony, in which it was decreed that "the people themselves were to be

the authors of their own laws in a properly constituted assembly." Scarcely had he set foot upon the new soil when he put the frame of government into operation, calling a general assembly of the farmers and cave-dwellers on the lower reaches of the Delaware Bay. In this curious assembly of "plain people"— very plain people we should think them — the constitution was adopted and suitable laws passed. For serene audacity and unlimited faith in the undertaking there is nothing of its kind like this in history. Untamed regions, wild Indians, motley groups of settlers, only loosely related, traducers at home, all counted for nothing as obstacles. The thing was of God, and it must go. And go it did, because it was of God. The constitution worked, worked admirably, as any good thing will work when in good hands; and Penn had successfully planted what he had already prophesied in England God would make the "seed of a nation."

This frame of government, though revised and altered in its details, remained essentially unchanged in its principles from the time when its author landed in 1682 until the Revolution of 1776, nearly a hundred years. When the thirteen colonies after the war consolidated themselves into a nation, and undertook the difficult

task of creating for themselves a constitution, their representatives assembling for the purpose on the very ground where Penn had tried his "holy experiment," this "frame of government," drawn on the other side of the water, furnished, more than any other document unless it be Hooker's Constitution of Connecticut, the fundamental principles for the construction of the new instrument. It is scarcely too much to say that, when the natural history of the American Constitution is fully written, it will be found to have been born, not in the brain of Madison, Hamilton, or Franklin, or of any other of the distinguished statesmen who sat in the Constitutional Convention of 1787 and worked out with so much wisdom the details of our great national charter, but in the brain of this man of God, who in obedience to the heavenly visions that came to him dared to break with all the customs and precedents of his time, and to go as far as his English citizenship and dependence on the crown would permit him to go in creating a government of the people by and for themselves.

The statue of William Penn above the city hall in Philadelphia yonder, which one can easily imagine to blush with shame as certain politicians of the place pass beneath it, is higher from the ground than any other in the world. It is fitting

that it should be so. Most men are soon left behind by the march of progress, and their ideals are outgrown when their age has passed away. Not so with Penn. The civilized world, even our own America, has not yet come up with him. He had his weaknesses and his imperfections, especially in his judgments of men; but they were like the spots on the sun,— they sprang from the same virtues and energies which made him great and powerful. His central ideals were as eternal as those of the Master, after whom he framed his life and policies, and can never be outgrown. He is still the statesman of the future; and there is no voice out of our country's great past to which the present, with its aspirations, its hopes, its ambitions, its wanderings, its lapses from the high ideals which it had set for itself, might give heed with greater profit than to his.

# V

## Thomas Jefferson and the Influence of Democracy upon Religion

# THOMAS JEFFERSON AND THE INFLUENCE OF DEMOCRACY UPON RELIGION.

In 1743 a third child was born to Peter and Jane Jefferson. They called him Thomas, not, I suppose, with any prophetic knowledge that he was to be the sceptic among the colonists; but, certainly, no man more completely than Thomas Jefferson declared by every attitude of his life and every utterance of his lips that, unless he should see the print of the nails, he would not believe. The shot that was fired at Concord echoed in this young man's mind when, at thirty-two, he stood in the Continental Congress, and was selected, together with Franklin and Adams and Jay, to frame the Declaration of Independence. That declaration was based upon his conviction that the colonies owed no allegiance to the British Parliament; that to claim such allegiance was to exact by one legislature, independent and free, obedience by another legislature, as free and independent as itself.

It is not proposed to make the address of this afternoon a biographical survey nor a political plea. The biography of Jefferson is the record

of the emotions of a human soul. It may be enough to say of his boyhood that at fourteen his father died; and he found himself well endowed, well placed, and well connected. Neither Jefferson nor Madison nor Washington was *technically* a gentleman; but each was so near the margin of that coveted title in Virginia that he had only to step into matrimony to win the title for himself, or to step upon the public arena of achievement to vindicate the title as already his.

Peter Jefferson married Jane Randolph, and the Randolphs were better off than the Jeffersons in point of estate; and the one thousand acres which Peter Jefferson acquired upon his betrothal, as being a fit domain to bring to his marriage, was augmented by the sale of a place for his house from the Randolph side of the account, for which there was given, it is said, the largest bowl of arrack punch.

In the College of William and Mary, Thomas Jefferson found his education, studying fabulously long hours,—one might almost say, mythically long hours. And yet it is recorded of him that he gained a thorough knowledge of Latin and Greek and French and Spanish and Italian, and purposed to study German, if he might procure the books. Certain it is that, when at thirty-two

upon his entry into the Continental Congress, the sage fathers of your own New England and the commercial spirits of New York and Pennsylvania looked up in wonder to see so young a man who knew so many things, and, besides, could survey an estate, could play the violin, could lead in a minuet, could argue a case at law, and could use the English tongue in a way to make them all his debtors. He had entered the House of Burgesses at the age of twenty-six, taking the training there which prepared him for his later work in the Continental Congress, in the office of Secretary of State, as minister to France, and for serving two terms as President of the United States. He reckoned his whole life practically as a life of public service. He claimed for it sixty-one years of public service. He was in office perhaps some thirty-nine years; but there was no time at which he was not a public servant, and so justly reckoned sixty-one of his eighty-three years to the public good. His activities were in a Virginia so charming that Channing said in 1799 that, if he "could separate the Virginians from their sensuality and slaves, he would be able to think of them as the finest people in the world." He elevates them above his own New England in the fact that they are "more hospitable, less reticent, and do not love money

so much." However this may be, as an impression upon the mind of Channing, who was private tutor in a family of Virginia in 1799 and 1800, it is quite certain that Virginia was a very charming place in which to live. No class distinctions were there, based simply upon family lines. They were open-hearted, hospitable to all comers. All who could vindicate their right to be received were received upon their own account of themselves, and maintained their position by the continuance of that account. Yet there was in Virginia one thing that immediately aroused the indignation of Thomas Jefferson when he came into public life, which was in opposition to all democractic principles, as he conceived them, namely, the State Church. It was not believed by him, any more than it was believed by Roger Williams, that the State or the Church could dominate the human soul. Certainly, neither by Jefferson nor by Roger Williams was it believed that the Church and the State could be united in any such survey of the rights of man. In the contest that Jefferson soon led in the House of Burgesses for the disestablishment of the State Church, a different view was held by one of the elderly members in powdered wig and three-cornered hat and silver-topped cane. "No gentleman," said he, "would choose any road to

heaven but the Episcopal." But there was a serious difficulty about the State Church in Virginia. It had no bishop, nor could procure any. The rectors, vicars, and curates earnestly exhorted the people to bring their children to the bishop, but he was in London. The clergy were confronted by the serious people of Virginia, as the deputation confronted the lords of England, with the charge of the abuse of their privileges and disregard of their duty. It was said, with some humor, by one of the number of those who entered into this contest, that the clergyman "had a nominal interest in their souls and an actual tithe of their estates." The struggle for a bishop was settled by the Connecticut Episcopalians in the election of Dr. Seabury to that office. But, when the application from the United States to London for a bishop came before the lords ecclesiastical in England, it was found at last that Virginia did not join in the petition; and a vote of the House of Burgesses recorded the gratitude of their rulers that the Virginia Episcopalians had abstained from the petition for a bishop.

These things are mentioned, in order that you may see the rise of the sense of independence of all ecclesiastical authority. The first American Conference of Methodists came about this time, held in Philadelphia in 1773. The first General

Conference of the Methodist Church, a significant growth of this time, was in 1784. Coke comes from England, sent by Wesley, consecrated by Wesley and his associates; and Asbury is ordained bishop. The reorganization of the Catholic Church falls to this period in Maryland, in a colony, now a State, in which the Catholic Church had been the pioneer of religious liberty, as it understood religious liberty. 1789 is a great year in America as to religion and as to the democracy which lay at its root. The Protestant Episcopal Church Convention was in Philadelphia in that year. The meeting of the Methodist Council, to deliberate upon unity of doctrine and of form, was held in the same year. In that year, 1789, Baltimore was created, by special bull of Pius VI., a see of the Catholic Church, and is still its primacy. The First General Assembly of Presbyterians met in Philadelphia in 1789. They had already given Witherspoon to the Continental Congress. And yet, when the Baptist Church and all others refrained from the plea for the assessment of all persons according to their means for the maintenance of religion, these same Presbyterians were found joining with the Episcopalians in such a request.

We come now to the first significant declaration of Thomas Jefferson with respect to the rights

of the soul and of the mind in religion. It is called his Declaratory Act. It was written by Jefferson, singularly enough, in that time of political liberation, 1776, but was not introduced by him into the Assembly of Virginia until 1779, and was not passed by them until 1785. Said Jefferson in this Declaratory Act, "Be it enacted by the General Assembly that no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatever; nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burdened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish or affect their civil capacity." This is exactly in accord with the view which Thomas Paine had announced; and, doubtless, he had conferred with Jefferson as to its announcement, to the effect that "toleration is not the opposite of intolerance, but its counterfeit. Both are despotisms. The one assumes to itself the right of withholding liberty of conscience, and the other of granting it." And those of us who know what word has taken the place of tolerance must applaud this protest so early against so inconvenient and despicable a word. For now no man

uses the word, but, rather, *spiritual sympathy*,— the effort of one man to see what another man sees, and to compare the views together. The conviction has grown in our day that it is a small ledge of observation that is not large enough for two to stand on while they get the view.

Another significant matter in which Jefferson had a hand was the section of the Bill of Rights drawn by Patrick Henry. The Bill of Rights itself was by George Mason, as a whole; but Patrick Henry drew the section that had to do with the subject in hand. "Religion," said he, "is the duty we owe our Creator; and the manner of discharging it can be determined only by reason or conviction, and not by force or violence; and, therefore, all men should enjoy the fullest toleration in the exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience, unpunished and unrestrained by the magistrate, unless, under the color of religion, any man disturb the peace, the happiness, or safety of society; and that it is the mutual duty of all to practise Christian forbearance, love, and charity towards each other." Both Jefferson and Madison protested against the form of this statement; and it was modified, so that the words "toleration" and "magistrates" were both eliminated from it. The objectionable clause was stricken out, and this substituted:

"All men are equally entitled to full and free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience." But Madison went further. "No man, or class of men," said he, "ought to gain emoluments by the fact of their religious relationship."

These are some of the signs of the times that were manifest in the period of Jefferson's most active history.

I pass now to consider the association of Jefferson's name with the term "Democracy." It must be remembered that Democracy, as Jefferson conceived it, was Republicanism. The first term used by him was not "Democrat," but "Republican." Then, in order that he might clear the atmosphere and be understood, he used the awkward phrase "Republican-Democrat." And, finally, by that laziness of mind which is so common, all other terms were dismissed, and his party came to be known as the Democrats. This term is used in this connection in its philosophic, not its political, sense. Jefferson's shade is so often invoked to be present at the banquets of those who call themselves "Democrats" that it is well just here to say that his democracy was of an older type, and had to do with the rights of society and the freedom of the human mind, not with the spoils of society and the enslavement of

party prejudice. The association of Jefferson's name with democracy was the result, first, of his mania against monarchy; for by no lighter term can the attitude of his mind be expressed. The slightest suspicion in John Adams, for instance, of clinging to family distinction or to ancient tradition, or to anything that smacked of English regard, aroused his wrath, until he charged John Adams himself with apostasy.

The second source of his enthusiasm for democracy was in his antagonism to Hamilton. It is safe to say that neither Hamilton understood Jefferson, nor Jefferson Hamilton. Hamilton believed that Jefferson was an honest man, both personally and politically. Jefferson believed that Hamilton was an honest man personally, but politically ever ready to resort to force or to trickery to gain some end. The centralization which Hamilton taught was exactly antagonistic to the States' Rights, which was fundamental to Jefferson's political creed; for Jefferson was author, not only of that form of statement with regard to States' Rights in Virginia, but author, also, in part, of the Kentucky Resolutions. His aversion to monarchy amounted, as I say, to a mania, but was associated in his mind with a passion for liberty. It might have been said of him, as Matthew Arnold says of Shelley, with

the change of a word or two, that "That radiant and ineffectual angel beat his luminous wings in the void in vain." For, with Jefferson, every stroke of the wing was a lifting of the whole political body; and the luminous character of his utterance gave radiant form to the impulses of other men. While Hamilton, at a dinner in New York, smote the table with his hand at the mention of "the people," and said, "Your people is a great beast," Jefferson held firmly to the inherent rightness of the popular decree, and yet was at heart a dictator. It is the old story of the man who thinks he knows being willing to guide the people who ought to know.

In contrast to this democratic spirit which now ruled the Virginian mind, we turn for a moment to the attitude of the New England mind toward this new democracy. The New England mind was free, it declared; and yet, to every suggestion of democracy, the one cant phrase was the sufficient answer in that day,—"Look at France!" The French Revolution, which to Jefferson had been an inspiration, leaving him untouched by its anarchy, only moved by its deep emotions, was to New England, and justly, a sign of anarchy and a herald of dissolution. And yet in New England there were not wanting tendencies and attempts toward a democracy which Virginia

was fast achieving. In New England the growth of Arminianism — the doctrine of salvation by faith and free grace, as distinguished from the Calvinistic decrees — was matched in democratic tendency by the inauguration of a public school system, which, as Dr. Hale says, was as genuinely and joyously adopted as though men did not believe in total depravity. They believed the child was totally depraved, but must be entirely educated. To this must be added the determination of election by ballot; and the determination, by written law, to check the decisions of the General Court. And yet, may it be said, under the term of this lectureship, it was John Cotton who held that democracy was not a fit government for Church or State. He might well have added "for Church and State"; for, after all that can be said, the New England state was not democratic except in its town meeting, and in its town meeting, for a long period, inspected its church roll to determine upon the right to vote. It was Thomas Hooker, standing for independence, declaring for Congregationalism as the democratic form of government, who said: "The foundation of authority is laid in the free consent of the people. The choice of the people's magistrates belongs to the people of God's own allowance. They who have the power to appoint

magistrates have also the right to place bounds and limitations on the power and place unto which they call them."

But here is a suggestion of divine right and that theocracy which lay at the very root of Hooker's scheme of thought concerning the Church. The power of the clergy in all this district was equivalent to an inquisition. Contrast Jefferson's faith in the rightness of the people, the way in which he felt down through all the ebullition of the surface to the great undercurrent of popular thought, and placed his faith upon that,—contrast this with the statement of that man who, perhaps, more than any other, phrased, in strenuous words at the time, the feeling of New England concerning democracy. I quote from Fisher Ames: "Our country," said Fisher Ames in 1803, "is too big for union, too sordid for patriotism, too democratic for liberty. What is to become of it? He who made it best knows. Its vice will govern it by practising upon its folly. This is ordained for democracies." Again, in the same year, Fisher Ames says: "Democracy cannot last. It has no resistance, though its next change shall be into a military despotism. The reason is that the tyranny of what is called the people and that of the sword both operate alike to debase and corrupt, until

there are neither men left to desire liberty nor morals with power to sustain justice."

That is capital English, but it is dreadful nonsense. We read with composure these declarations of our dissolution in 1803, and might well learn from them an abatement of our fears for 1903. It was George Cabot who said in 1804: "Even in New England, where there is among the body of the people more wisdom and deliberation than any other part of the United States, we are full of errors, which no reason could eradicate, though there were a Lycurgus in every village. We are democratic altogether; and I hold democracy, in its natural operation, to be the government of the worst." He was anxious to betray a little knowledge of Greek by putting democracy over against the government of "the best." Such natural tendency to aristocracy and learning marked the public utterances of the time. We have now the attitude of two great sections of a great country. I have already quoted to you the different impression made upon the mind of Channing, when, in 1799 and 1800, he was a private tutor in Virginia. This is the Virginia which he so much applauds, from his applause abating only his disgust for their sensuality and their slaves; yet, in this pleasure-loving, chivalric, hospitable Virginia, all the

structures of society rested on a State Church, on primogeniture, on exemption by law of the seizure for debt of all lands, and upon slavery. And these foundations Jefferson set himself to remove to the last stone of the substructure. These were the props at which he struck. These were the pillars around which this far-seeing giant cast his arms and bowed himself. Yet, throughout all this period, when Jefferson and his associates, Madison, Mason, and others, were working at the problem of democracy, as seen in the abolition of the State Church, in the removal of the limitations upon the law in favor of primogeniture, and release of all lands from debts incurred in a previous generation, there was growing the conviction that religion, like government, depended upon the sovereign soul. The phrase "the sovereign citizen," and the phrase "the sovereign soul," are twins of their thought. The individual responsibilities to man as constituting society, and to God as dominating with his will the moral sense by which that society was governed, these two go hand in hand in the thought of this time. Already the influence of Channing and his friends was beginning to be avowed and felt on every hand. One shrewd critic of the period says: "Human nature was adorned with virtues hardly suspected before, and with hopes

of perfection on earth altogether strange to their theology. So strong was the reaction against old dogmas that for thirty years society seemed less likely to resume the ancient faith in the Christian Trinity than to establish a new Trinity, in which a deified humanity should have place." This is an exaggerated statement of a palpable fact; for the divinity of human nature was fast becoming a corollary to the rights of man. The elder Buckminster, of Portsmouth, was clinging to the crumbling enclosure of Calvinism, and yearning over his son Joseph, who had gone into bondage to Boston Unitarianism. Just then Hosea Ballou, having caught the impulse of democracy in religion which had been gathering steadily in these Northern lands from its fountain-head in Virginia, was announcing an Universalism more extended than ever Paul or Origen proclaimed. The faith of the new movement declared itself thus: "That there is one God, whose nature is love, revealed in one Lord Jesus Christ, by one Holy Spirit of grace, who will finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness." This is the deliverance of New Hampshire to match the deliverance of Virginia. And, while this seems but a limited movement toward ultimate democracy, it may be called, in view of the phraseology it announced, an ultimate democracy

to be achieved by intermediary legislation. Already the Constitution of the United States had put upon its record "that no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification for any office or public trust under the Constitution." And Judge Story, commenting upon this, declares, "The Catholic and the Protestant, the Calvinist and the Arminian, the infidel and the Jew, may sit down now to the communion-table of the National Council, without any inquisition into their faith or mode of worship."

Another of the results of the democracy for which Jefferson stood was that certain doctrines were fast falling into disregard, preliminary to their final collapse. They were salvation by belief, exclusive salvation, and the criminality of error. It was fast becoming true in all the churches that belief was to give way to the experience of religion. For this the Baptist stood, with his rite of baptism. For this the Methodist stood, with his doctrine of the Holy Spirit. For this Campbell stood in his organization in 1809 of the sect that bears his name, the sect of the Disciples of Christ, claiming the Bible as the sole guide of faith and conscience. And more and more the utterances of men like Paine and Jefferson and their associates forbade the erection of error into a crime. Probably they

did not quote, but they believed those lines of George Herbert in which he says : —

> " Be calm in arguing, for fierceness
> Makes error a fault and truth discourtesy.
> Why should I feel another man's mistake
> More than his sickness or his poverty ?
> In love, I should ; but anger is not love,
> Nor wisdom, neither ; therefore gently move."

So for liberty of expression they contended ; for liberty of discussion, and for liberty of association.

I have traced in this very imperfect way the motive and attitude of democracy as understood and expressed by Thomas Jefferson. Let us look now for a few moments at the result of it in the whole movement of the religious life in America. I have already said that the sovereign citizen and the sovereign soul had come to be the watchwords, the one of the political, and the other of the religious world. It was not that all realized responsibility as citizens, nor that all claimed responsibility as souls. There was the tendency to elevate strong governments, like the Methodist and the Episcopalian, in place of individualism. But still through all there ran the same impulse,— the sense of responsibility for life, not for opinion ;

for conduct, not for creed. And so it came to pass that over and over again great bodies were found drifting away from the established requirements of their faith, and yet steadily increasing the sense of responsibility for righteousness.

Democracy, as conceived in this discussion, is based in the essential dignity of human nature, to use a phrase of Channing,— the essential dignity of human nature. Under its influence there could not for long survive a doctrine of depravity which was a reflection upon the Creator's wisdom and benevolence. In view of the strenuous endeavor for the liberation of the slave, made by Jefferson in the presentation in the Assembly of Virginia of his bill forbidding the importation of slaves beyond that date; of his endeavor for the emancipation of the slave and his disappointment that the State of Virginia and the country in which slavery was a fact were not ready for that movement, and yet declaring, as he did, that the liberation of the slave was as certainly upon the books of destiny as any other right of man, it could not be possible under these conditions that the doctrine of an incurable hell could last long. But the real stress, the strain of integrity laid by democracy upon the religious life, is upon the self-sufficiency of the soul to be its own guide and its own arbiter

in matters of religion. The Congregationalism which began as intending democracy, soon began to seek for reinforcement of its integrity in terms of confession beyond the terms of covenant with which it at first contented itself, making laborious statements, appealing to assemblies for vindication and for guidance. So in the liturgical churches the tendency to enrichment of ritual, the elaboration of services, enforced the claim for the æsthetic value of the services of religion as distinguished from the stern integrity of that earlier time. And yet I think it may be said, until proof to the contrary is furnished, that the growing feeling that the religious life needs artificial helps in the church is not so much a reflection upon democracy in religion as it is a reflection upon the *verve* and power and individual force of those who constitute the group which seeks so to buttress itself. The effort to lean upon supports instead of standing erect; the consciousness that the individual soul is not enough for its own satisfaction,— these, under manifold appearances, represent the sense of insufficiency as felt by the failing sense of God. It must never be mistaken for that which it vainly represents; for when, in the order of self-government in religion, the democratic principle is deserted, it is proof, not that new faiths have arisen, but

that new weaknesses have appeared. No democracy is possible when the people distrusts itself. No integrity of soul can be vindicated while it lies supine upon its tradition of faith.

I speak of this because the other problem comes associated with it in our minds. I offer you as a suggestion in this connection whether the personal value, the sense of personal value, is not essential to the whole scheme of democracy in religion; and whether the tendency to impersonality in religion is not also a tendency to irreligion itself. What is meant by this? From the time when Hagar uttered her feeble cry, "Thou, God, seest me," in the old folk story of the Hebrews, to the time when Jesus said, "I am not alone, for the Father is with me," there is an unbroken succession of prophetic souls who have learned that "the prophet is he who knows upon what adamantine manhood he must take his stand, and to what heights of divinity he must look up." This is what we mean by the integrity of the individual soul. This is the reason for the insistence by earnest men and women that the religious life of America shall resolve itself into the two words "God" and "the soul." This is the reason for the statement continually made by those who seek the largest liberty for the souls of believers in

the great facts of religion, that there are but two words in religion, "God" and "the soul"; and that all religion, in its history, philosophy, and services, has been the effort to bridge over from the one great pier of thought to the other, by virtue of which the soul alone may find God, and God may seek the soul. For, said Jesus, "The Father seeketh,"— seeketh: the searching God is on our path,— "The Father seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth." More and more we must hold, it seems to me, to the true democratic conception of religion; namely, the essential validity of the soul's own rights. What led Jefferson to protest against slavery, to protest for the rights of the States, as distinguished from the centralization taught by Hamilton? What led him to phrase the ideal of equality in the Declaration of Independence, of which it may well be said that it states not "glittering generalities, but eternal ubiquities"? What led him to turn with faith through all his life to the man next the soil, as distinguished from the man in the artificialities of the city? What made him feel that the farmer, not the trader, was the man who was likeliest to find his rights and independence under the general government? All these are but the aspects, in the domain of gov-

ernment, administration, and civic duty, of that fundamental thought in religion,— that in the last analysis God and the soul are alone together; and all that abates from the soul's conscious personality, and all that interferes, whether in terms of pantheism or terms of impersonality of any kind, with the conscious presence of the living God with the living soul, must tend more and more to irreligion. Religion is an experience, and all vital experiences are personal.

This, then, seems to me the lesson of the hour; namely, that, as Jefferson in every act of his life, even in the founding of the University of Virginia, which he regarded as his greatest service to the nation, put the responsibility upon the individual mind, so religion leaves the man shut in alone with God. In the organization of the University of Virginia we have a singular instance of faith in unrestricted liberty. The University of Virginia has no president, no obligatory schedule of studies, no entrance examinations; has no rules for its students as to the attendance upon study or absence from study. It makes but the one rule,— that in the college and out of it, in the seat of learning or at home, each student is to bear himself as a gentleman. That much-abused term harks back to the meaning that old Thomas Dekker gave it

in that play of which we sometimes quote these lines: —

> "The best of men
> That e'er wore earth about him was a sufferer;
> A soft, meek, patient, humble, tranquil spirit,
> The first true gentleman that ever breathed,"

This was the conception which Jefferson had of the University of Virginia, in which he felt such pride; and that conception runs parallel to the freedom of the religious life. Error cannot be made a sin. Mistake cannot be erected into a crime. Human nature cannot pray in phalanx. It is not possible to enhance the impact upon the mind, even by multiplying the agencies for approaching the shrines of worship. Throughout the whole range of thought the dignity of human nature and the sufficiency of each soul to its own task before God appears. And what was said by that great Democrat, that great Republican, that believer in his country, that emancipator of the slave,— "The government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth," — may be paraphrased, it seems to me, as to the religious life and its tendency among our American people,— that the time shall come when each man shall find God for himself, and shall tell his discovery to the next man with joy, but without insistence that he shall hear.

# VI

## William Ellery Channing and the Growth of Spiritual Christianity

# WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING AND THE GROWTH OF SPIRITUAL CHRISTIANITY.

In the summer of 1830 tidings reached Channing in Newport of the Revolution of the three days of July in France. It was glorious news to him: for it meant the victory of the principles ever dearest to his heart — freedom of speech and the rights of man — in the land which from young manhood he had regarded as the home and symbol of antagonistic principles. A free press and a free people had conquered the Bourbons under Charles, and Lafayette was at the head of the National Guard. It had been a conflict of liberty against despotism, and liberty had won. In his exultation, Channing shortened his vacation and hastened to Boston, that he might have part in what he supposed would be universal jubilation. But to his dismay he found Boston unmoved. The general apathy shocked and disheartened him; and, when shortly afterwards a young Harvard graduate was introduced to him by Miss Peabody, Channing greeted him with the ironical words: "I see you young gentlemen of Cambridge were quite too wise to

be thrown out of your accustomed serenity by the new revolution in France! I was a young man in college in the days of the first French Republic, and at every crisis of its history our dignity was wholly upset. We were rushing to meetings of sympathy or kindling bonfires of congratulation and walking in torchlight processions. But now the young American has come to years of discretion, and may not give way to such unseemly excitements." At the close of the conversation, when the young man rose to take leave, Channing invited him to call again, to which he replied, "Yes, sir, I will; for you are the only young man I know!" Instantly Channing answered in a loud ringing tone that was almost an hurrah, "Always young for liberty!"

This incident, related by Miss Peabody, and especially the sentence, "Always young for liberty," strikes what should be the keynote of the discourse concerning Channing to which this occasion summons us. By the general plan of the course we are called upon to consider Channing primarily as an apostle of spiritual liberty, and as preacher, philanthropist, theologian, only in so far as these modes of his activity stand related to the principle of spiritual freedom. Yet this limitation is neither unjust to him nor regret-

table by those who honor him; for in the case of a unified character, such as Channing's undeniably was, the whole is implicit in every part, and adequate presentation of any single phase involves consideration of the character as a whole. Moreover, if the particular principle selected be central to the life, especially if it be the organizing one, to group our thoughts about it is to see the phases of the nature in their true relations and just proportions. That love of liberty was such a central and constructive principle in the life and thought of Channing, no one can doubt. In the Introductory Remarks to the first volume of his "Collected Works," Channing mentions two thoughts so frequently occurring in all his writings as to constitute their characteristics; and these are respect for the human soul and reverence for liberty. Of the latter he says, ["It is] a sentiment which has grown with my growth, which is striking deeper root in my age, which seems to me a chief element of true love for mankind, and which alone fits a man for intercourse with his fellow-creatures. I have lost no occasion for expressing my deep attachment to liberty in all its forms, civil, political, religious, to liberty of thought, speech, and the press, and of giving utterance to my abhorrence of all the forms of

oppression. This love of freedom I have not borrowed from Greece or Rome. It is not the classical enthusiasm of youth which by some singular good fortune has escaped the blighting influences of intercourse with the world. Greece and Rome are names of little weight to a Christian. They are warnings rather than inspirers and guides. My reverence for human liberty and rights has grown up in a different school, under milder and holier discipline. Christianity has taught me to respect my race and to reprobate its oppressors. It is because I have learned to regard man under the light of this religion that I cannot bear to see him treated as a brute, insulted, wronged, enslaved, made to wear a yoke, to tremble before his brother, to serve him as a tool, to hold property and life at his will, to surrender intellect and conscience to the priest, or to seal his lips or belie his thoughts through dread of the civil power. It is because I have learned the essential equality of men before the common Father that I cannot endure to see one man establishing his arbitrary will over another by fraud or force or wealth or rank or superstitious claims. It is because the human being has moral powers, because he carries a law in his own breast, and was made to govern himself, that I cannot endure to see him taken out of his own

hands and fashioned into a tool by another's avarice or pride. It is because I see in him a great nature, the divine image, and vast capacities that I demand for him means of self-development, spheres for free action; that I call society not to fetter, but to aid his growth. Without intending to disparage the outward, temporal advantages of liberty, I have habitually regarded it in a higher light, as the birthright of the soul, as the element in which men are to put themselves forth, to become conscious of what they are, and to fulfil the end of their being."

From this quotation it is plain that the two distinctive principles of all Channing's work, respect for the human soul and reverence for liberty and human rights, were, as he says, intimately connected. Indeed, the former was the *because* to the latter's *therefore*. This will appear more plainly if we trace the origin of the two principles, and so discover their organic affiliation.

There is always a certain futility in the attempt to account for a great man by reference to his heredity and environment, especially if either be unduly emphasized. To enlarge upon environment is as if one should account for a rose by chemical analysis of the soil out of which it grows, and to lay stress upon heredity is as if one should expect a bulb kept from the earth to blossom

into a tulip. Nor can the union of the two suffice for an explanation; for Channing's brothers, eminent as they were, did not do and could not have done his work in the world. Let us acknowledge, then, that in Channing, as indeed in all men, there was the ultimately inexplicable, that mysterious individuality which passeth knowledge. Notwithstanding the science of meteorology, the wind still "bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth"; and, notwithstanding all that may be said of heredity and environment, it is still true that "so is every one that is born of the Spirit." But with this preliminary caution we may profitably consider certain influences which at least fostered and encouraged his respect for man and reverence for liberty.

Channing was born at Newport, R.I., on the 7th of April, 1780. His father was a lawyer, of rather more than local eminence, becoming attorney-general of the State in 1777, and, after the adoption of the Federal Constitution, district attorney for Rhode Island. His mother was daughter of William Ellery, one of the Sons of Liberty, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, member of Congress from 1776 to 1786 with the exception of the years 1780 and 1782.

So far, then, hereditary influences were on the side of freedom. And the environment was no less congenial. Of all the States none has been more zealous for liberty than the State of Roger Williams. It may be granted that its zeal was not always according to knowledge,— one may applaud the freedom-loving spirit of Roger Williams without approving all the acts which it prompted,— but it cannot be doubted that in the little State love of independence and dislike of everything that even looked toward interference with it were supreme. Throughout the country there was objection to the Order of the Cincinnati. Rhode Island promptly disfranchised its members. Of Jeshurun it is written that it waxed fat and kicked, but against all authority assumed by Congress Rhode Island in utter leanness outkicked Jeshurun. Its attitude toward the Federal Constitution has already been described in this course by President Faunce. It is not surprising, therefore, to find in Channing the independence of his native State, tempered and regulated, however, by wisdom and reflection. In Harvard, which he entered in 1794, there was almost a riot of school-boy feeling. Channing fraternized with those who wore the black cockade, and shouted for Adams and Liberty. It is interesting to recall that he wrote the address sent

by the students to President Adams, the flamboyant rhetoric of which is in amusing contrast with the chastened style of his mature years, and that, when the college faculty announced that all political discussion must be excluded from the commencement exercises, Channing indignantly resigned the oration assigned him; nor would he consent to take the part until the faculty had made concessions which to himself and his friends seemed sufficient to meet the demands of his conscience and self-respect. Yet he was not content that the matter should rest thus; and at one point in his oration on "The Present Age," turning to the faculty, he exclaimed with impassioned utterance, "But that I am forbid, I could a tale unfold which would harrow up your souls!" We like to dwell upon this early exuberance of Channing because of his later moderation. It is pleasant to know that there was something to moderate. Channing has too often been regarded as naturally deficient in emotion, temperamentally cool and intellectual; but the truth is that the limitation which many seem to find in him in this respect was not a natural deficiency, but a self-restraint deliberately achieved by wisdom and effort. The popular opinion is based mainly upon his published sermons; but it should be remembered that these are almost all occasional

discourses, out of which, since they were necessarily largely controversial in character, he was particularly careful to keep the heat customarily associated with polemics, trusting to light alone, to the reason, and not to the emotions, for his approval. It is said that in his regular work — that is, in his parish sermons — there was an emotional warmth not found in his published discourses, and criticisms are on record to the effect that a certain sermon tended to encourage fanaticism, and that in general he was in the habit of putting his hearers into "an immense excitement of feeling." It is hard for us to think of Channing as a man of intense feeling, yet of the fact there can be no doubt. In his letters to his college friends there is stilted sentimentality, and sometimes an outburst of emotion which goes far to justify Professor Fisher's reference to his "maudlin tempers." His brother wrote to him, "You are the baby of your emotions, and dandled by them without any chance of being weaned." He himself confesses that his life had been a struggle with his feelings, and that the victory over his habit of reverie and musing, in which fancy won an ascendency dangerous to his moral life and his powers were weakened and dissipated, was gained by the reflection that virtue does not consist in feeling but in acting from a sense of

duty. But, with this curbing of his emotions, the passion for liberty only grew more deep and ardent, so that toward the close of his life he said in a sermon to his own people that, much as he valued his own views of God and duty, there was a cause nearer his heart than any particular doctrine, and that was the cause of religious liberty. Thus he obeyed at eve the voice obeyed at prime; and the talent given him by heredity and environment did its proper work in the world, and grew by the doing.

Here, then, was the youth with his passionate love of liberty, his fervent conviction that men ought to be free in body, mind, and soul; but the religious system in which he was brought up was based upon a conception of human nature with which such freedom was quite incompatible. Berkshire County in Massachusetts has a well-deserved reputation for summer loveliness and winter austerity; but its worst December blasts are balmy compared with the rigor of its theological solstice in the second half of the eighteenth century, while Edwards was at Stockbridge, succeeded by West, Hopkins at Great Barrington, and Bellamy and Smalley not far away in Connecticut. These were leading representatives of what was called Consistent Calvinism, or sometimes also Berkshire Divinity. According

to their teaching, which agreed in substance, although there were individual variations at special points, man as man was totally incapable by nature of knowing and loving God, and must ever remain so unless enlightened and regenerated by special grace. Into the details of this Berkshire Divinity we cannot enter here, but it would be gross injustice not to speak of the splendid ethical standard it set up for the regenerate. Virtue is love of universal being, and this virtue comes to pass in man only by the act of the Spirit. This alone is goodness acceptable to God; and how paltry and impotent appeared all *good works*, judged by this ideal of true virtue and genuine goodness! That was a sublime ethical standard which in the hands of Hopkins took the practical form of a willingness to be damned for the glory of God. It was generally conceded that some were to be damned, and it was said that this damnation was for the complete revelation of the glory of God. How could God's hatred *of sin* be shown except in a universe where sin is to be found? Therefore, sin is in the world. But how, again, can his *hatred* of it be shown except by his awful and eternal punishment of it? But for sin and hell, therefore, this side of God's nature would be unrevealed: hence his glory would be imperfect. For the glory of

God, therefore, some are to be damned; and, consequently, one who cares not for himself, but only for the glory of God, must be willing to be among the eternal victims. And, since such desire for the glory of God was possible only to the regenerate, willingness to be damned for the glory of God became a test of regeneration. Thus even this revolting doctrine testifies to the grandeur of the ethical teaching of the Berkshire Divinity as it was held by Hopkins in the form of Disinterested Benevolence. Now this Samuel Hopkins was settled in Newport in 1770, and, barring three years of absence during the Revolution, remained as minister there until his death in 1803. Although the family of Channing belonged to Dr. Stiles's church, Dr. Hopkins and his doctrines were well known; and, when the other church was closed for some time after the war, its members, and the Channings among them, attended upon the preaching of Dr. Hopkins. And Dr. Hopkins never flinched from the most uncompromising declaration of his principles. It is said that on one occasion the unrelenting doctor, dining with a young minister, detected the ruffles which it was then fashionable to wear, but which the doctor disliked, peeping out of their concealment under his coat. Whereupon the doctor said with some asperity, "I don't

care for ruffles; but, if I wore them, I'd wear them like a man." That was characteristic: others might wear theological shackles betrayed only by a miserable habit of shuffling, but Dr. Hopkins wore his without disguise, holding them gifts of God,—anklets and bracelets of beauty. "He was distinguished for nothing more [says Channing] than by faithfulness to his principles. He carried them out to their full extent. Believing, as he did, in total depravity, believing that there was nothing good or generous in human nature to which he could make an appeal, believing that he could benefit men only by setting before them their lost and helpless condition, he came to the point without any circumlocution, and dealt out terrors with a liberal hand."

Evidently, such religious teaching as this made the passion for liberty logically absurd. Set free a child of the devil, whose nature is depraved! Set free a mind which in its natural condition cannot possibly learn the truth of God! Set free a man who by his very nature cannot practise true virtue! In fact, these Calvinists, with the splendid inconsistency which we so often have to applaud in men, were not true to the inevitable logic of their creed; but youth is not so waywise. If this teaching were true, the ideal of liberty must be

denied. Consequently, there were many who, identifying his doctrine with Christianity, and succumbing to the French influence then rampant in what was called infidelity, rejected Christianity altogether. Hence Channing's mind was exercised over the nature and evidences of Christianity, and it was at this period of his career that his great experience came. Reading one day certain passages in Hutcheson which asserted man's capacity for disinterested affection, he saw as by a light from heaven the truth of the dignity and worth of human nature, which, his biographer says, became henceforth "the fountain light of all his day, the master light of all his seeing." Is not the connection of thought plain? He had learned from Hopkins the glory of disinterested benevolence, but also that it is the property only of the sons of God; that is, the regenerate. But now he finds Hutcheson affirming the natural capacity of man for disinterested affection. Then is not man naturally a child of God? And, if so, then is not the nature of man to be respected and deemed worthy of all honor? Yes, is it not plain now that man may be trusted with liberty and that freedom is his birthright, even as God, whose child man is, is free? Thus his love of liberty found its support and guarantee in a thought of human nature. So the *therefore* of

freedom found its *because* in the thought of divine Fatherhood.

Having seen that the two ideas of respect for man as man and reverence for liberty were thus as one at heart of his thinking, we are prepared to see how they furnished both impulse and method to his practical activity. Very recently a magazine article referred to him as the famous philanthropist. That he would not have objected to the term, except perhaps on the ground of its swollenness, appears from his saying in a report to a committee of Unitarians appointed to consider the Ministry-at-large, "We ought to be by eminence Christian philanthropists." And this because he believed that the motive of philanthropy must be respect for man as man, and its method must be the liberation of the mind and soul of man. Let us recall his specific teaching with reference to one or two of the evils of society, to see how this motive and method were applied. The distressing problem of poverty forced itself upon him. Early in his ministry he wrote, "Let the poor be my end"; and here are a few of the many disconnected jottings in his journals, showing how the problem lay in his mind and the remedies he approved: "Causes of poverty to be traced. Charity is not enough directed. Intimate acquaintance with

poor families. Employment found. Provisions of wood in large quantities at cheap prices, and so with all necessaries of life. Excite no feeling of dependence. Stimulate to exertion. Relief such as to call out energy and remove whatever disheartens and disables. Comfortable houses to be let cheap to the poor. Innocent and improving amusements. Interesting works to be circulated among them. Associations among mechanics for mutual support, if reduced. Complete course of instruction for youth designed for active life. The poor need moral remedies. Let each rich family have some poor under their care. Connect the poor with good families." These are but casual memoranda in his journals; but how significant they are in the light of approved methods of modern philanthropy, and how acute and accurate is the diagnosis of the evil! A few more quotations will deepen this impression. In 1833 he wrote, "It seems to me an important means of improving the poor to improve the classes immediately above them, from whom their number is constantly recruited." In his address on Temperance there is clear hint of the modern settlement idea. He wrote one sentence which should be graven deep in the heart of every would-be philanthropist: "Be not wilful in well-doing." Such was to be the

method,— the method of liberation rather than of repression; and, next, what was the motive of philanthropy?

"Does any one ask [he says], Why shall I pity and help the poor man? I answer, because he is A MAN; because poverty does not blot out his humanity; because he has your nature, your sensibilities, your wants, your fears; because the winter wind pierces him and hunger gnaws him and disease racks and weakens him as truly as they do you. Place yourself, my friend, in his state. Make yourself by a strong effort of thought the inhabitant of his unfurnished and cold abode, and then ask why you should help him. He is a man, though rags cover him, though his unshorn hair may cover his human features,— a member of your family, a child of the same Father; and, what is most important, he not only has your wants and feelings, but shares with you in the highest powers and hopes of human nature. He is a man in the noblest sense, created in God's image, with a mind to think, a conscience to guide, a heart which may grow warm with sentiments as pure and generous as your own. To some this may seem declamation. There are some who seldom think of or value *man as man*. It is man born in a particular rank, clad by the hand of fashion and munificence,

moving in a certain sphere, whom they respect. Poverty separates a fellow-being from them, and severs the golden chain of humanity. But this is a gross and vulgar way of thinking, and reason and religion cry out against it. The true glory of man is something deeper and more real than outward condition. A human being created in God's image, and, even when impoverished by vice, retaining power *essentially the same with angels*, has a mysterious importance; and his good, where it can be promoted, is worthy the care of the proudest of his race."

Thus again and again Channing teaches that an indispensable prerequisite to social usefulness is a vital respect for man as man; and it were well if those who profess to love men had at heart the genuine respect for them which Channing had, and sought to inculcate. Thus both in method and in motive we find Channing's governing ideas. We should serve men because they are men, because under the poverty and vice is hidden the divine image of exalted humanity. Moreover, aid should be given in such a way as to remove the obstructions which prevent the realization of the divine ideal and let the humanity shine forth. To quicken the mind of man by truth and the soul of man by love is the only way to lift him permanently out of poverty and

vice. Poverty needs moral remedies. To free the enslaved mind is the method; and respect for man as man, and not merely love for him as a poor man, is the motive of philanthropy. If it be true, as Dr. Warner declares in *American Charities*, that "the preventive and educational work, in proportion to other kinds, has been more largely undertaken by the Unitarians than by any other denomination," it is because they have learned of Channing and have been made to drink in of his spirit.

Take another evil, that of drunkenness, and see how Channing treats it from the point of view of his creative principles. To him, naturally, the great evil in intemperance is inward, mental and spiritual. It is the voluntary extinction of reason, wilful self-degradation of man to the level of the brutes. Among its causes he enumerates the exhausting burdens of daily toil, which prompt the overworked to seek stimulants; the narrowness of lot which, by depriving the laborer of both the opportunity and the capacity for intellectual pleasures, restricts him to the gratification of the senses; the lack of self-respect among the poor, due to low social ideals; and the general materialism of the community. To be stimulated, he says in substance, is our great and universal want. For this we read, and to this we

devote our business hours. People even go to church to be stimulated rather than improved. Thus the thirst for stimulants characterizes the community, and in those classes who can afford themselves only a stimulus of intoxicating liquors the spirit of the age breaks out in intemperance. Is not this a remarkably comprehensive and profound view of the case, especially in its clear perception that intemperance cannot be regarded as a detached vice, but is constitutional in man and in society? And the remedies proposed are equally noteworthy. First of all, there must be physical training, since many become sots through bodily infirmity. Again, since many fall into the vice from lack of intellectual interests, a resurrection of mind is demanded; music, art, reading, wholesome amusements, must be provided. In a word, the moral and intellectual tone of the individual and of the community must be raised. Seriously, have we gone so very far beyond Channing in our treatment of intemperance? —

> "Are we wiser, better grown,
> That we may not, in our day,
> Make his *thought* our own?"

Intemperance is a heinous sin, because by it man is degraded from his humanity, the dignity

of human nature is impaired; and the remedy is in the upbuilding of the higher life of man, in setting free his dormant powers and arousing his soul. So the present-day emphasis upon personality is only an echo of Channing. "What, strike *a man!*" he said, when told of flogging in the navy. *A man*, in poverty and vice! *A man*, a drunkard! Then let brother help brother! Let man help man! Let the personality of the stronger bring life to the personality of the weaker, and permanent gain shall be wrought. It would be profitable to consider also his relation to other social reforms, such as education, in co-operation with Horace Mann, and peace, in company with Noah Worcester; but time forbids. Yet such an examination would only strengthen the conclusion already reached, that Dr. Channing's chief constructive principles were present in all his philanthropic work. His motive was reverence for man as man, and his method was not so much to suppress the lower instincts as to liberate the higher nature of man. The motive of humanity, the method of liberty.

One aspect of Dr. Channing's philanthropic work cannot be passed over without mention, slight as the mention must be,— his attitude toward slavery. In Miss Kingsley's vivacious

"West African Studies" is a quotation from a certain John Harford, of England: "Liberia was taken over by the American Republic and made a free country for all those slaves that were liberated in the time of the great emancipation brought about by that good man, W. E. Channing." This is noteworthy as showing the opinion of one who may fairly be called an outsider with reference to the anti-slavery movement in the United States, for Channing has sometimes been represented as faithless in this direction to his great principles of human freedom. But he did not seem indifferent at the time; for many of his friends, and in his congregation, deemed him extreme in his opposition to slavery, and wished he would leave the troublesome question alone. The truth is that he was condemned by the Abolitionists who could see but one way to free the slave,— and that was theirs,— and who, in consequence, had scant sympathy with any who were not wholly of their way of thinking. As a tutor in the family of Randolph in Virginia, he had first come to hate slavery; but it was during his visit to St. Croix in 1830 that he experienced a regeneration upon the subject. When he returned to Boston, the topic was in the forefront of discussion. Garrison had started the *Liberator*, and the political

aggressiveness of the South was becoming more marked and offensive. It would be as easy as needless to multiply citations for the purpose of showing that in his eyes the crowning iniquity was not the scourged body, but the imbruted soul of the slave. Of course, the system was horrible and intolerable; but how was it to be swept away? Here Channing was too wise and just to be dogmatic. At Randolph's house he had often heard slaveholders speak of the system with an abhorrence equal to his own, and he had trusted that spirit to possess the South and ultimately abolish the iniquity. But he saw only too plainly that the vehement attacks of the Abolitionists were uniting the South in defence of the wrong, and, as he feared, putting off the day of deliverance. Moreover, he had seen the good side of slavery, the absence of pauperism and the personal loyalties often developed between slaves and members of the master's family; and, although he had not been deluded by these things nor led to hate the iniquity one whit the less, he found the facts perplexing in considering methods of emancipation. Moreover, he looked forward to the condition of the slaves immediately after emancipation,— weak, ignorant, poor,— and wondered what would be their fate when liberated. So he could not go fully

with the Abolitionists. The question did not seem to him so simple, nor the answer so obvious, as to them. But, when Lovejoy was slain at Alton, his name headed the petition for the use of Faneuil Hall in which to hold an indignation meeting; and when, in deference to a counter-petition, the request was denied, Channing's voice was heard in calm and effective remonstrance. When the Abolitionists met a committee of the legislature, Channing appeared, and took Garrison by the hand. He spoke sorrowfully of the public indifference to the great subject of slavery, and wrote and preached against it. In this matter, however, as in others, he trusted to general rather than specific measures, and could not see his way clear to immediate emancipation. Hence, while the Abolitionists assailed him from the one side, the conservatives, many of whom were in his own church, attacked him from the other. Notices of anti-slavery meetings designed to be read from his pulpit were intercepted by vigilant watchers and kept from reaching him. The use of his church was refused for an anti-slavery meeting and even for a memorial service in honor of his old and tried friend and comrade, Dr. Follen. Although thus between two fires, he kept his even way, hating the evil because it denied the

divineness of the human soul, yet not seeing clearly the method of relief. His confidence was in mental, and not merely in physical emancipation. Now that the smoke and dust of the conflict have blown away, and especially in the light of subsequent developments which Channing clearly foresaw, are we not in a position to judge his attitude and that of many another like him more justly and sympathetically than was possible at the time? We see now that often the Abolitionists branded men with stigmas which cling to them even yet in popular estimation, who were every whit as zealous for liberty and against slavery as themselves, but who could not see the way to accomplish their deep desires. No friend of Channing need doubt that in the future men will find no inconsistency between his practice and his creative principles, nor conclude that he was any the less a lover and prophet of liberty because he saw the situation perhaps more clearly than those who condemned him, and sought their ends by other means.

We have dwelt so long upon Channing as a prophet of liberty in social reforms, in order that we might obtain the true point of view from which to judge his religious and theological work. It can be deemed nothing less than a grievous mis-

fortune that Channing was forced quite against his nature and inclination into theological controversy, and this for two reasons: In the first place, it has given him the standing of a controversialist in the popular mind, whereas we are informed that among all his unpublished manuscripts not one was to be found of a controversial character, a fact which shows that all such sermons and articles written were published. Hence in his "Collected Works" the proportion of polemics is very much larger than it was in his real interest and activity. Moreover, a misunderstanding as to the true nature of the Unitarian Controversy has directed attention to quite the most vulnerable point in all Channing's religious thought, and by it mainly he has been judged. To be explicit, it is commonly supposed that the principal point of contention between liberals and conservatives in New England at the beginning of the last century was the nature of Jesus and the correlated doctrine of the Trinity. It is true that point did assume prominence, and the name Unitarian, forced upon the liberals against their wish and protest, has perpetuated the disproportionate prominence of the doctrine; but, as so often happens in religious controversy, the principal subject of debate was not the real point at issue. As every one familiar with the history

is aware, the fundamental difference was not on the nature of Christ, but on the nature of man. Yet because Channing, as representative of the liberals, has usually been studied with reference to his Christology, he has suffered as a thinker in popular and even scholarly regard. Professor Fisher has said that "the particular conception which Channing set up in the room of the church doctrine of the Incarnation is one of the crudest notions which the history of speculation on that subject has ever presented." It is an extreme statement, and yet there is substantial justice in it. Channing thought of Jesus as certainly pre-existent, the highest of all created beings, and only short of the Eternal God himself. But this high Arianism is open to most of the objections urged against historic Trinitarianism on the one hand and pure humanitarianism on the other. Obviously, Channing was led to it by certain New Testament teachings which unquestionably represent Jesus as a pre-existent being of creation's highest order; and the modern science of New Testament criticism was below Channing's horizon. Miss Peabody reports him as saying once: "I do not deem it a question of importance, and may change my view with respect to it. I am aware I have never put my mind upon it." "I have never

put my mind upon it,"— and yet by that doctrine more than by any other he is popularly known and estimated as a religious thinker. Plainly, to his own mind, the moral personality of Jesus was an all-sufficient attestation of his authority, and reason for adoration. Theoretically, Channing remained an Arian, but practically, so far as emphasis in teaching and significance to thought are concerned, he became a Humanitarian. The Trinitarians believed in the pre-existent Christ sustaining an eternal, inherent relation to the Father. Channing rejected the eternal and essential relation, but retained the pre-existence, because, having saved the unity of God, he no longer was deeply interested in the problem. For let it never be forgotten, the nature of man and the competence of human powers in religion was the real point at issue between the parties; and to Channing's mind the controversy was not so much of doctrine against doctrine as of bondage against freedom. As has already been shown, the rigorous Calvinistic creed appeared to him a prison-house within which the mind was held in slavery,— its rights denied, its powers maligned. However it may have appeared to others, the conflict so presented itself to Channing; and few who now survey the strife, with its antecedents and consequences, will hesi-

tate to affirm that his view was just. Therefore, his prominent participation in it was only another illustration of his constraining love of liberty, springing out of his conception of human nature.

Moreover, it looked to Channing as if there were an insidious attempt on the part of the conservatives to undermine the cardinal principles of Congregationalism, the polity of ecclesiastical freedom in which he believed with all his heart. In 1820, he wrote: "Congregationalism is the only effectual protection of the Church from usurpation, the only effectual security of Christian freedom, of the right of private judgment. As such, let us hold it dear. Let us esteem it an invaluable legacy. Let us resist every effort to wrest it from us. Attempts have been made, and may be repeated, to subject our churches to tribunals subversive of their independence. Let the voice of our fathers be heard, warning us to stand fast in the liberty with which Christ has made us free. The independence of our churches was the fundamental principle which they aimed to establish here, and here may it never die." That Channing had good reason for his apprehensions cannot be questioned. The *Panoplist* had suggested the setting up of ecclesiastical tribunals, the object of which was to dis-

fellowship the liberals. The ancient proposals of 1705, after lying for a century in the limbo to which John Wise consigned them, were resurrected and urged anew. And, if formal tribunals were not possible, there was a warfare of insinuation and misrepresentation and depreciation, a withdrawal of real fellowship, which was tantamount to excommunication. There was, then, a moral, if not an ecclesiastical, influence exerted against freedom of thought and speech which the liberty-loving spirit of Channing could not brook. In very truth, Channing's place in the controversy was due not to views concerning the Trinity and pre-existence so much as to the two creative principles which his whole career illustrates,— respect for man as man and reverence for liberty and human rights.

The operation of these principles we have to trace once more in a crisis which shows him at his very noblest. Unitarianism, as it was called, became popular and fashionable in Boston and vicinity, and, by and by, its adherents, forced out of the old Congregational fellowship, began to hanker for the flesh-pots of sectarianism. With this came a stiffening of theological doctrine until Channing was led to say sadly, "We have a Unitarian orthodoxy." Could he who abominated sects have part in one, even though it were

the outcome of a movement with which he had been identified? Could he who believed in absolute freedom regard with complacency the rise of a Unitarian orthodoxy? Manifestly not. Hence we find him exceedingly jealous of all associations which had collective power, for whatever purpose or with whatever high intentions designed; and hence it is that Parker could write that there were two parties among the Unitarians, of which the progressive party was led by Dr. Channing. To this period belong certain utterances over which every Unitarian, and particularly every Channing Unitarian, lingers with more joy and pride than over any other words he ever wrote.

So early as 1828, in a sermon upon "The Great Purpose of Christianity," he said: "I have no anxiety to wear the livery of any party. I indeed take cheerfully the name of a Unitarian because unwearied efforts are used to raise against it a popular cry; and I have not so learned Christ as to shrink from reproaches cast upon what I deem his truth. Were the name more honored, I should be glad to throw it off; for I fear the shackles which a party connexion imposes. I wish to regard myself as belonging not to a sect, but to the community of free minds, of lovers of truth, of followers of Christ both on earth and in heaven. I desire to escape the narrow walls of a

particular church, and to live under the open sky, in the broad light, looking far and wide, seeing with my own eyes, hearing with my own ears, and following truth meekly, but resolutely, however arduous or solitary be the path in which she leads. I am, then, no organ of a sect, but speak for myself alone; and I thank God that I live at a time and under circumstances which make it my duty to lay open my whole mind with freedom and simplicity." This is the Channing whom Unitarians love and rejoice in, deserving the name of Channing Unitarians only as this spirit is in them. And so to the end of life his spirit was forward-looking. He resented the notion that youth tastes the best of life, leaving to age only its unpalatable dregs, proclaiming about sixty the best time of life, when this was the tale of his own years. Like the great father of our New England Congregationalism, he believed that more light and truth were yet to break forth out of God's Word, that Unitarianism, as it then was, was but the vestibule through which men must journey to the ampler truth beyond.

There came a severe test of loyalty to his principles when Ripley, Emerson, and Parker began a reform upon his reform. He himself believed firmly in miracles, deeming them important, although the personal character of Christ was of

supreme importance. But Parker came denying the miracles, and affirming that the personal character of Christ had nothing in the world to do with the truth or error of his teaching. The demonstrations of Euclid are demonstrations, whatever Euclid may have been, whether virtuous or vicious. Here was a man in Channing's own fellowship whose thought was momentously adverse to his; yet let it always be said to Channing's honor that there came from him no word of condemnation, no demand for excommunication, no word of sympathy with those who would fain silence the heretic. "Let a full heart pour itself forth," said Channing. This seems to me in all the circumstances one of the resplendent moments in his career, a shining proof that the love of liberty, even when freedom produced what he deemed error, was of supreme worth in his eyes. Then, as in the Kneeland case, he demonstrated that in his eyes freedom of thinking was actually more precious than correctness of thought.

An apostle of spiritual freedom, then, he was rightly called. And it was a fitting close to his career that his last address was on the emancipation of the slaves in the West Indies, spoken in Lenox on the 1st of August, 1841. What could be in more perfect harmony with his whole

thought and life than the concluding words of this his last public deliverance? —

"I began the subject in hope, and in hope I end. I have turned aside to speak of the great stain on our country which makes us the by-word and scorn of the nations. But I do not despair. Mighty powers are at work in the world. Who can stay them? God's word has gone forth, and it cannot return unto him void. A new comprehension of the Christian spirit, a new reverence for humanity, a new feeling of brotherhood and of all men's relation to the common Father,— this is among the signs of our times. We see it: do we not feel it? Before this all oppressions are to fall. Society silently pervaded by this is to change its aspect of universal warfare for peace. The power of selfishness, all-grasping and seemingly invincible, is to yield to this diviner energy. The song of angels, On earth Peace, will not always sound as fiction. Oh, come, thou kingdom of heaven, for which we daily pray! Come, Friend and Saviour of the race, who didst shed thy blood on the cross to reconcile man to man, and earth to heaven! Come, ye predicted ages of righteousness and love, for which the faithful have so long yearned! Come, Father Almighty, and crown with thine omnipotence the humble strivings of thy children to subvert oppression

and wrong, to spread light and freedom, peace and joy, the truth and spirit of thy Son, through the whole earth."

So ends the final message spoken to the world by this true and faithful witness to the dignity of man and the worth of spiritual liberty. It was not the last that came to him from the source whence all his life proceeded; for his last recorded utterance was the feebly whispered words, "I have received many messages from the Spirit." After delivering the Lenox address, he tarried awhile longer in the lovely Berkshire region, and then started for Boston, driving through Pittsfield and Williamstown to Bennington, where he was taken ill, and with the passing days slowly faded from earth to heaven. When Dean Stanley visited Boston, he asked to be taken to Mount Auburn; and, in response to a somewhat surprised inquiry as to the object of the visit, asked in equal surprise, "Is not Channing buried there?" Similarly, the Emperor of Brazil, visiting Cambridge, sought the grave of Channing,— with whose books he was familiar,— and plucked from a tree near by a memento of his visit. Yet, when four years ago I visited Bennington, anticipating no difficulty in finding the place where he died, it was only after many inquiries that a citizen was found who had even so much as heard of Dr. Channing; and his

knowledge appeared to extend only to the fact that he had died in an inn now known as the Walloomsac Inn, standing not far from the battle monument, opposite the ancient church, and the cemetery in which the elder Buckminster lies buried. The proprietor of the inn knew nothing of Dr. Channing, and resented as a disparagement of his hostelry the assumption that any one had ever died within its walls. Fortunately, however, I met there the son of the physician who attended him, of whom he said, "A good face that, and a most kind man." Consequently, it was my privilege to be shown the very room in which he died. Its windows command a view of surpassing beauty, and the eyes which had rejoiced from childhood in the glory of the sea were lifted up unto the hills when the great help came. It was at the sunset hour which had always afforded him serene joy, as from his Newport garden or through the windows of his Boston house he watched the dying light of day and the gentle oncoming of the night. Were not the illumined sky and the soft outshining of the stars on that placid Sunday in Bennington suggestive of the prophet's words,— "They that are wise shall shine as the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever"? Symbolic, too, was the death in a wayside inn,

since his eager, truth-seeking mind had tolerated no permanent abiding-place, but was always on the way, the homeward way that leadeth ever nearer to God. His memory is a priceless heritage. May his spirit abide with us and in us forever! The cause for which he lived still needs friends. Tendencies which he discerned with the insight, and deplored with the sadness, of a prophet have strengthened apace: wealth and power accumulate in the hands of a few, menacing individual liberty and opportunity; theological thought, revolting from the old Calvinism which he opposed, is moving with almost irresistible urgency toward a new Calvinism, which he foresaw, every whit as subversive of human freedom; animated by noble zeal for social utility through denominational efficiency, churches build ecclesiastical machinery and centralize authority. So long as these tendencies continue, and there are those who believe in liberty and the worth of the individual soul, the words of Channing will be timely; and those who would fain cherish even in their small measure the spirit that was in him will turn often to his calm, luminous pages, and draw strength and courage from that shining soul, always young for liberty.

# VII

# Horace Bushnell and Progressive Orthodoxy

# HORACE BUSHNELL AND PROGRESSIVE ORTHODOXY.

NOTHING could have brought me hither to-day but a strong sense of personal obligation. I can hardly hope to find anything new or important to say of Horace Bushnell. The recent careful and admirable studies of his life and work have omitted nothing that is essential to a just understanding of who he was and what he did. Mr. Mead's appreciative and beautiful sketch of him; Dr. Munger's critical, sympathetic, and thoroughly adequate discussion of his theological teachings; the comprehensive series of addresses given last June at the Bushnell Seminary in Hartford,— have covered the ground. Most of the things that I could have wished to say have been nobly said already. Yet, when this invitation came to me, I could not decline it; for there is a duty of personal confession which no man can perform for another, and my debt to Horace Bushnell is too large for me to refuse to come and bear my testimony. The little blossom that I shall bring to the garland which the years are weaving will add nothing to its beauty, but it will not lack the fragrance of grateful memory.

The topic of this lecture, as phrased for me, not by me, would be misleading if it suggested that Orthodoxy first became progressive at the initiative or under the leadership of Horace Bushnell. When Orthodoxy became progressive, it would be difficult to say. We might go back to Edwards for its stationary state, but the biographers will not let us pause there. Edwards himself, they say, was a reformer. Professor Allen tells us that, in making the motive of true virtue consist in devotion to an infinite Being [rather, I suppose, than in obedience to an abstract law], he marks the first beginnings in the Calvinistic churches of a theology in which love is the central principle of the creation and the law of all created existence." And Professor Fisher evidently regards Edwards's doctrine of the Atonement as a distinct advance upon that which had preceded it.

The theologians following Edwards all believed themselves to be progressive. Bellamy, Hopkins, Emmons, the younger Edwards, the elder Dwight, all made "improvements" in the doctrinal system. The notion of a "stationary state" in theological thinking did not much obtain among New England thinkers. John Robinson's expectation of more light seems to have been shared by all of them.

In the youth of Horace Bushnell this movement was going forward with great vigor. For his own part in it he was made ready by the influences of his home, of which he says: "The religion of the house was composite,— that of the husband, in his rather Arminian type, received from his mother; that of the wife, in the Episcopal, from hers; and that of the Calvinistic Congregational church, in which they were now both members. . . . I remember how, returning home, after second service, to his rather late dinner, my father would sometimes let the irritation of his hunger loose in harsher words than were complimentary on the tough predestinationism or the rather over-total depravity of the sermon: whereupon he always encountered a begging-off look from the other end of the table, which, as I understood it, said, 'Not,— for the sake of the children.' It was not the Calvinism that she cared for; but she wanted the preacher himself kept in respect, for the benefit of the family. In which, unquestionably, she had the right of it." *

Here was ample suggestion and warrant for independent thinking, and, happily, along with it the restraint of a wholesome reverence. Under these well co-ordinated influences he passed through college, spent a year in teaching and in

* Life and Letters of Horace Bushnell, p. 28.

editorial work, and then returned to Yale as tutor. It was a religious motive that had taken him to college at first, but his religion did not prosper there. Mr. Joseph Cook said on one occasion that Bushnell became while in college an infidel of the Tom Paine variety. That is probably one of Mr. Cook's many marvellous axioms: nothing can be much farther from the truth. Still he testifies of himself that his religious life was utterly gone down. "I had run to no dissipation," he says; "I had been a *church-going, thoughtful man.* My very difficulty was that I was too thoughtful, substituting thought for everything else, and expecting so intently to dig out a religion by my head that I was pushing it all the while practically away." Dr. Munger correctly diagnoses the case: "He might during this time be described as sound in ethics and sceptical in religion. Each is easily explained. The soundness of his morality was due to his nature and training: his scepticism was chiefly due to the theology in which he was involved." I should be inclined to go a little further, and say that his scepticism was primarily due to the soundness of his morality. It was his ethical thoroughness, more than anything else, that made him sceptical respecting the doctrines which he was expected to hold and teach.

What is called his conversion, or reconversion, during his tutorship, was simply the entire submission of mind and heart and will to the regnancy of right. He had tried to be right in his relations with men, but he felt that he was not right with God. This was the failure that came home to him. "Beginning," says his biographer, "at the plain standpoint of conscience and duty, to which, in darkest hours of doubt, he had ever stood faithful, he asks himself the test question (which he afterward gave to others as a guide), 'Have I ever consented to be, and am I really now, in the right, as in principle and supreme law? to live for it, to make any sacrifice it will cost me, to believe everything that it will bring me to see, to be a confessor of Christ as soon as it appears to be enjoined upon me, to go on a mission to the world's end if due conviction sends me, to change my occupation for good conscience' sake, to repair whatever wrong I have done to another, to be humbled, if I should, before my worst enemy, *to do complete justice to God*, and, if I could, to all worlds,— in a word, to be *in wholly right intent*, and have no mind but this forever.' Thus the simple desire to be and do right was the first step. By the side of the moral question, intellectual doubts appeared unimportant and were deferred." This was Horace Bushnell's

conversion, and the result of it was that he turned from the study of the law and entered the divinity school.

His theological questions have been deferred. He has found God; and in finding him he has been made sure of what at first he dimly believed, that "he is a right God." His life is devoted to the study and the proclamation of the truth about God. And the principle which has guided him in this important crisis of his life is the principle that will guide him in all his theological thinking. His God is "a right God"; and the truth must be told about him, and nothing must be said concerning him which implies any lack of righteousness in him. The ethical test will be applied, then, unflinchingly to theology. If the theories of the lecture-room will not abide this test, they cannot claim his acceptance.

It seems tolerably clear that they did not all abide this test. The teaching of New Haven Seminary at this time was regarded by the orthodox world at large as dangerously radical. Those "improvements" of which I have spoken had resulted in pruning the New England theology of many of its mediæval elements. The whole process had been in the direction of a more ethical doctrine. What these "improving" theologians had mainly wanted to get rid of were the

theories which imputed unrighteousness to God. That credit must not be denied them. Edwards's Doctrine of foreordination, which boldly proclaims the irresistible efficiency of the divine decree by which men are made sinners, and the præterition of the non-elect, had been rejected because of its essential immorality; and a doctrine less at war with fundamental ethical convictions had taken its place. Sin, it was now held, is not decreed, but permitted. The decrees of God are not wholly arbitrary: we must suppose that his fore-knowledge of human conduct had something to do with them. The old doctrine that we are held responsible for Adam's sin and could justly be punished for it had been abandoned for the same reason: it was now held that the *consequences* of His sin are ours by natural inheritance, but that *guilt* cannot be inherited. Because God is just, he will not blame us for the misdeeds of our ancestors. These and other modifications of the old doctrine had already taken place, greatly to the scandal of many stanch Calvinists in and out of New England. The advocacy of these new views had indeed divided the Congregationalists of New England, and had resulted in the founding of a new theological seminary where the ancient and unimproved Calvinism was to be propagated.

So far as these changes had resulted in forms of

doctrine less repulsive to the moral sense, Horace Bushnell undoubtedly approved them. But they had not gone far enough. Some theories were still held concerning God which were not easily reconciled with a belief in his righteousness, and toward these his attitude was sure to be one of dissent.

The teacher of theology at New Haven, the Rev. Nathaniel W. Taylor, was a man of great power as a metaphysician and as a preacher. He had done what he could to eliminate the unmoral element from the doctrine which he taught; but there were still implications in it which Bushnell could not accept; and the method of Taylor, which enthroned dialectics, was utterly at variance with the poetic and mystical tendency of Bushnell. Thus the dissent of Bushnell from the current Orthodoxy began pretty vigorously in the seminary, albeit the Orthodoxy with which he was then confronted was of an advanced type. We have no very clear account of the discussions of the class-room. Dr. Munger says that Taylor and Bushnell "were not within hailing distance, hardly on the same side of the planet. Hence, as often has happened in New England, the theological teacher and his brightest pupil parted company."

From the seminary Bushnell was called to the

North Church in Hartford,— the only church he ever served. It was not long before his people knew that a man of power was among them. We have some of the sermons that he preached in the first year of his ministry, and they are notable sermons. That one so well known to many of us, entitled "Duty not Measured by our own Ability," must have given to the most mature and cultivated men in his congregation a powerful impression of the intellectual vigor of their young minister. Dr. Munger says: "His first volume — 'Sermons for the New Life' — covers a quarter of a century; but, so far as style, thought, and doctrine go, it would be difficult to assign a date to any of them. That on 'Living to God in Small Things' was preached in the first year of his ministry; and it might have been preached in the last, for he produced none more mature and effective. That on 'Every Man's Life a Plan of God' — an early sermon — made an impression as deep and wide as any preached in the country, with two or three exceptions."

By such work as this the young minister soon made a place for himself in the esteem and affection of his congregation from which it was not possible to dislodge him. There was not much controversy in his earlier years: he was getting rooted and grounded in the love of his people.

The dispute between the Old School and the New was raging about him, but he did not take part in it. At New Haven they suspected him of Old School tendencies. The distinction set up in that debate did not enlist his interest: he was going deeper.

Two or three of the public addresses which he delivered during the first ten years of his ministry are important. His Phi Beta Kappa oration at Yale College in 1837, on "The True Wealth or Weal of Nations," is notable for the clearness with which it discerns and the vigor with which it exposes the inadequacy of the political economy whose interest centres in commodities, leaving out of sight the welfare of men. There is," he says, "in the new science of political economy, careful as it is in its method, and apparently unanswerable in its arguments, an immense oversight, which is sure to be discovered by its final effects on society, and to quite break up the aspect of reality it has been able to give to its conclusions. It deifies, in fact, the laws of trade, not observing that there is a whole side of society and human life which does not trade, stands superior to trade, wields, in fact, a mightier power over the public prosperity itself just because it reaches higher and connects with nobler ends. Could these price current philosophers only get a whole nation

of bankers, brokers, factors, ship-owners, and salesmen to themselves, they would doubtless make a paradise of it shortly, only there might possibly be no public love in the paradise, no manly temperance, no sense of high society, no great orators, leaders, heroes. . . . What, then, it is time for us to ask, is that wealth of a nation which includes its weal, or solid well-being? that which is the end of all genuine policy and all true statesmanship? It consists, I answer, *in the total value of the persons of the people.* National wealth is personal, not material. It includes the natural capacity, the industry, the skill, the science, the bravery, the loyalty, the moral and religious worth of the people. The wealth of a nation is in the breast of its sons. This is the object which, according as it is advanced, is sure to bring with it riches, justice, liberty, strength, stability, immobility, and every other good, or which, being neglected, every sort of success and prosperity is but accidental and doubtful." *

This was written and spoken just twenty years before John Ruskin's "Political Economy of Art," and twenty-three years before that great chapter on "The Veins of Wealth" in "Unto this Last," in which the same doctrine is burningly upheld, almost in the same words. It is a

* Work and Play, pp. 50–52.

loud call, you see, for the ethicizing and humanizing of political economy. That science must submit to the ethical test, not less than theology. Nothing that concerns human kind can evade that judgment.

In another address on "The Growth of Law," delivered before the alumni of Yale six years later, he strikes a deeper note. Here he finds a law of moral progress in history. From the first there are signs in nature that "there is to be a growth of law and a growth into law, and the moral imperative is thus to obtain a more and more nearly spontaneous rule in the world"; that "there is a work of progressive legislation continually going forward, by which the moral code is perfecting itself. . . . Moral legislation is, in fact, one of the highest incidents of our existence. Not that man here legislates, but God through man; for it is not by any will of man that reason, experience, and custom are ever at work to make new laws and refine upon the old. These are to God as an ever-smoking Sinai under his feet; and, if there be much of dissonance and seeming confusion in the cloudy mount of custom, we may yet distinguish the sound of the trumpet, and the tables of stone we shall see in due time distinctly written, as by no human finger." *

The whole oration is a masterly exposition of

* Work and Play, pp. 81, 92.

the great law of moral evolution. God is in his world, and Bushnell has found him here, unfolding his purposes in the common life of men. The Right to which he has owed allegiance is not, then, some abstract edict of a distant tribunal: it is God, coming to light in the life of humanity. Well, indeed, may the orator predict that under such a conception the imagination will be "fired by the vigor of a faith that sees, in all things visible, vehicles of the invisible, in everything finite a symbol of infinity." How large a portion of Dr. Bushnell's most kindling thought is flashed out in this luminous sentence! How far ahead of his time his mind is travelling in this great oration! And what a trumpet-note is this from his closing words to his brethren of the alumni: "First of all let us, as scholars, have faith in the future. No man was ever inspired through his memory. The eye of genius is not behind. Nor was there ever a truly great man whose ideal was in the past. The offal of history is good enough for worms and monks, but it will not feed a living man. Power moves in the direction of hope. If we cannot hope, if we see nothing so good for history as to reverse it, we shrink from the destiny of our race, and the curse of all impotence is on us. Legions of men who dare not set their face the way that time is

going are powerless: you may push them back with a straw. They have lost their virility, their soul is gone out. They are owls flying toward the dawn and screaming, with dazzled eyes, that light should invade their prescriptive and congenial darkness." *

It is the truth enforced in this oration, the truth of the vital and organic relation of God to the life of the world,— what we call to-day the doctrine of the immanence of God,— which really underlies the first of Dr. Bushnell's treatises that brought him under heavy censure, his "Christian Nurture." Not that this truth was frankly avowed in that book: Bushnell had not yet got so far as that. His contention "that the child is to grow up as a Christian, and never know himself as being otherwise"; "that the aim, effort, and expectation should be, not, as is commonly assumed, that the child is to grow up in sin, to be converted after he comes to a mature age, but that he is to open on the world as one that is spiritually renewed," — rests, in his argument, rather on the covenant with the regenerate than on the clear recognition of the universal Fatherhood. Nevertheless, his thought is all the while diving down to this profounder depth.

"All society is organic," he maintains, "the Church, the State, the school, the family. . . . The

* Work and Play, p. 122.

child is only more within the power of organic laws than we all are. We possess only a mixed individuality all our life long. A pure, separate, individual man, living *wholly* within himself and from himself, is a mere fiction." And it is really because God is in his world, in the human world, the life of every part of the social organism, working in all men to will and to do according to his good pleasure, that this doctrine of Christian nurture is justified. Bushnell felt it deeply, if he did not say it: he implied it, if he did not fully express it; and his critics were quite right in accusing him of "naturalism." Dr. Charles Hodge, while recognizing much value in the book, still charged him with "resolving the whole matter into organic laws, explaining away both depravity and grace," and presenting the whole subject "in a naturalistic attitude." That was a little more than the truth, but it was partly true. Bushnell was finding God in organic laws, there was no doubt about that. There was a clear prophecy in its arguments of that epoch-making treatise which was coming by and by, on "Nature and the Supernatural as together constituting the one System of God."

It may seem that what Dr. Bushnell was doing in "Christian Nurture" and in "Nature and the Supernatural" had no very close relation to

that ruling purpose of his whose workings we are trying to trace. What did he do in these books to ethicize theology? The relation of these discussions to his ethical purpose seems, doubtless, more remote; but it is not less real.

The doctrine respecting the relation of children to the kingdom of heaven which he assailed in "Christian Nurture" was one whose ethical complications were dubious. All these little children were assumed to be, until their conversion, in a state of nature, which was a state of alienation from God and of hostility to him. He might not hold them guilty of Adam's sin: that dogma had been modified by the New Haven theologians; but, until their conversion, they were outside of his kingdom of grace. There were no legal barriers, perhaps, to keep them out; but they were out, all the same. To the fatherly love and care of God they were strangers. The religion of that day, as Dr. Bushnell said, "takes every man as if he existed *alone;* presumes that he is unreconciled to God until he has undergone some sudden and explosive experience in adult years, or after the age of reason; demands that experience, and only when it is reached allows the subject to be an heir of life. Then, on the other side, or that of the Spirit of God, the very act or *ictus* by which

the change is wrought is isolated or individualized, so as to stand in no connection with any other of God's means or causes,— an epiphany, in which God leaps from the stars, or some place above, to do a work apart from all system, or connection with his other works. Religion is thus a kind of transcendental matter, which belongs on the outside of life and has no part in the laws by which life is organized,— a miraculous epidemic, a fire-ball shot from the moon, something holy, because it is from God, but so extraordinary, so out of place, that it cannot suffer any vital connection with the ties and causes and forms and habits which constitute the frame of our history." *

All this theory which Bushnell is impaling falls in with the conception of religion as having a compartment all to itself in our lives, as being a wholly separate interest from our other affairs. That conception is sure to issue in a defective morality. And what shall be said of the character of a God who leaves the little children of our homes to be practically orphans,— in their spiritual relations,— destitute of a heavenly Father's care until they have grown old enough to pass through the ordeal of conversion? It is not true of the best earthly parents that they maintain a waiting attitude toward their children, holding

* Christian Nurture, p. 187.

back tenderness and loving kindness until the children are old enough to ask for it. It would seem that the heavenly Father must love the little children in the days when their consciousness is dawning as much as we love them then, and must want them to know it.

I do not want to try to tell just what the attitude of God toward the unconverted children was believed to be in that theology which Dr. Bushnell was repudiating in "Christian Nurture," and which rose up to denounce his teaching as dangerous: I am afraid that I could not make any statements about it which would not seem unjust to those who held it; but it certainly seems to me that the God whom that theology assumed was a being of a very defective character. He was not what Dr. Bushnell would call "a right God": he did not deal with the little children of our homes in a way that satisfies our notions of justice; for we have learned to believe that love is a debt owed by every moral being to every other moral being, and that he who fails to receive love gets less than is due him. The only explanation which that old theory could offer of God's relation to unconverted children must have involved the idea that his goodness is different in kind from our goodness, and that is the essence of the worst immorality. The only reply

to that is Mill's indignant outburst: "I will call no being good who is not good in the sense in which I apply that term to my fellow-men; and, if such a being sends me to hell for not loving him, to hell I will go." The fact that such a conception of God underlay this doctrine was the real reason why Bushnell made war upon it: it was his ethical thoroughness that found voice in this revolutionary treatise.

I think, also, that the Rev. Charles E. McKinley is entirely right in saying that Bushnell's conception of the whole matter of religion in the family "was so strange, so foreign to current modes of thought, that a complete new doctrine of the Spirit's methods of activity was necessary. The positions taken in 'Christian Nurture' made the work on 'Nature and the Supernatural' imperative. Some total reconstruction of the conception of the relation of the human world with its vital forces to the divine world had to be undertaken. Is human nature part of a spiritual province, the scene of the spirit's constant activities, or is it alien territory, to be invaded now and then for purposes of grace from some celestial stronghold?" This was the question which "Nature and the Supernatural" undertook to answer; and the writer from whom I have just quoted goes on to say, in words that are as

true as they are beautiful: "Bushnell has compelled us, in theory at least,—and theory and practice are not always contrary,—to make for the Holy Spirit a dwelling-place in the homes of men, where he may come, not now and then as a heavenly stranger, to work a miracle of grace, but as a familiar Presence to abide, working daily in us and ours what is well-pleasing unto God. In our New England firmament the author of this doctrine of Christian nurture was the morning star of that glad new day when joyous faith should realize once more that God is in his world; that heavenly grace comes into human lives on the common ray of daily sunshine as well as on the lightning's blinding flash, while the very atmosphere about us is charged with holy energies, because, 'Now are we the children of God.'" *

But the work for which Dr. Bushnell is best known lies in another field of thought. His name to the theological world is most identified with his teachings respecting the redeeming work of Christ. "Bushnellism," as a term of reproach, as a badge of heresy, describes a theory of what Jesus Christ has done to save men from their sins.

In their attempts to "improve" the Calvinistic theology the New England theologians had not neglected the doctrine of the Atonement.

* Bushnell Centenary, pp. 109, 110.

Attempts in that direction were made at a very early day. William Pynchon, the founder of Springfield, was constrained by his ethical instincts to challenge the doctrine prevailing in his time; and he wrote a treatise on "The Meritorious Price of our Redemption," which he sent over to England to have printed. The authorities of the "Great and General Court" of Massachusetts got wind of this heresy which was sprouting in the distant wilds of Agawam, and they determined to nip it in the bud. A theological quarantine was decreed, incoming ships were watched, the consignment of books to Pynchon was seized on its arrival at the wharf and taken to the theological pest-house, and after examination the books were publicly burned here on Boston Common. Dr. Bushnell had an impression, I think, that the heresy of Pynchon was akin to his own, but it was nothing of the kind: the heresy of Pynchon was rock-ribbed Orthodoxy, even as compared with the later New England doctrine against which Dr. Bushnell protested. The heresy of Pynchon consisted merely in denying that Christ suffered the actual pains of hell in his conscience. He did not deny the principle of legal substitution: his theory, as the title of his book implies, was a kind of commercial theory; but his moral sense revolted against the notion that the Son of

man was tormented with remorse on account of the sin of the world. That was why they burned his book on Boston Common.

There was need enough that New England Calvinism should be "improved" in this particular theory, and the work had been going on from Pynchon's day. Edwards introduced some valuable mitigations into its rigidity, and others who followed him had helped in the same direction. The doctrine of a limited atonement had been abandoned; it was now believed that Christ died for all men, and not merely for the elect; and the New Haven theologians had accepted the Grotian theory that the sufferings of Christ were not penal, not intended to appease the wrath of God, not legally substituted for the penalties due to men, but rather meant to be such an exhibition of God's abhorrence of sin as would satisfy his general justice, and permit him, without endangering his government, to forgive penitent sinners. It must be admitted that this "governmental" scheme is one of the weakest pieces of theological casuistry that logic has ever invented. It was meant, of course, to eliminate the doctrine of the legal substitution of the innocent for the guilty, the immorality of which had been strongly felt. To say that God inflicts the penalty due to the sinner upon the Saviour, and so

frees the sinner from guilt, seems a monstrous proposition; to say that God's justice is satisfied by such a substitution is a horrible imputation upon him. The New England theologians recoiled from the theory, but they could not rid themselves of the idea that there was something judicial in the transaction. In handling this matter, they were grievously embarrassed, wavering often between affirmation and denial. I remember not very many years ago hearing Mr. Joseph Cook, in a lecture on the Misrepresentations of Orthodoxy, say in a very impressive way: "Orthodoxy is misrepresented as teaching that the sufferings of Christ were penal. They were not penal. They were a sacrificial chastisement, *in some sense penal.*" Orthodoxy which wobbles like that is in danger of being misunderstood. Orthodoxy was trying, no doubt, to be ethical; but it was making a bad failure of it. The Judge of all the earth was represented by it as saying, in effect, to the sinner: "It would endanger my government if I should forgive you without inflicting suffering on some one. I must express my abhorrence of sin. I have therefore chosen an innocent victim. When you witness the suffering which I inflict on him, you will have such an impression made upon your mind of my hatred of sin as shall enable me to forgive you." It would seem that there might

be some confusion in the mind of the sinner as to the exact ethical significance of such a procedure. It would be hard to invent a theory by which ethical distinctions would be worse confounded. Surely, the deity to whom such principles of action can be imputed is not the "right God" to whom Bushnell's allegiance is vowed. It was to maintain the justice and honor of the God whom he loved and worshipped that he lifted up his voice in protest against the current theories of the atonement.

It was in the year 1848, when Europe was seething with revolution and a wave of awakening thought was passing over the human mind, that Dr. Bushnell's thoughts were kindled upon this great theme. In February of that year he passed through one of those experiences which are vouchsafed to prophets,— what seemed to him a mystical unveiling of the real meaning of the message which had been given to him to deliver. It came to him in the watches of the night. Mrs. Bushnell tells us of it: "On an early morning in February his wife awoke to hear that the light they had waited for, more than they that watch for the morning, had risen indeed. She asked, 'What have you seen?' He replied, 'The gospel.' It came to him at last, after all his thought and study, not as something reasoned

out, but as an inspiration,— a revelation from the mind of God himself." It is not rare for God thus to give his best gifts to his beloved in their sleep. In those subconscious moments which follow a wrestling with some great theme, the truth so long sought swims into the seeker's ken, and what was long opaque is transparent as crystal. It was a great moment in Bushnell's life. "I seemed," he said, "to pass a boundary. I had never been very legal in my Christian life; but now I passed from those partial seeings, glimpses, and doubts into a clearer knowledge of God and into his inspirations which I have never wholly lost. The change was into faith,— a sense of the freeness of God and the ease of approach to him."

Here was the vision, and the tasks were not far away. Three theological seminaries, Cambridge, Andover, New Haven, almost simultaneously invited him to give their commencement addresses. The invitations were promptly accepted; and the three great addresses which were afterward grouped in his volume, "God in Christ," were delivered,— the one on the Atonement, at Cambridge Divinity School, July 9; the one on the Divinity of Christ, involving his theory of the Trinity, at New Haven, August 15; the one on Dogma and Spirit, at Andover, in September.

It must not be supposed that Dr. Bushnell entered upon these great tasks in a polemical temper. Far from him was any such purpose. What he most devoutly wished was that he might so interpret the great truths with which he was dealing as to win for them the consent of all to whom he spoke. If he exposed what he regarded as the inadequacy of existing views, it was that he might present more intelligible and more inspiring theories. His spirit in all this work was irenic and comprehensive. The controversy which followed was not of his desiring.

Yet the testimony must be clear respecting the unsound morality of the theories which he is seeking to supplant. As to the Old School theories of the atonement, which represent Christ as suffering the penalty of the law in our stead, he says, in his Cambridge address: "They are capable, one and all, of no light in which they do not even offend some right moral sentiment of our being. Indeed, they raise up moral objections with such marvellous fecundity that we can hardly state them as fast as they occur to us. Thus, if one evil or pain must be repaid by an equivalent, what real economy is there in the transaction? What is effected save the transfer of penal evil from the guilty to the innocent? And if the great Redeemer, in the excess of his

goodness, consents, freely offers himself to the Father, or to God, to receive the penal woes, or some sufficient part of the penal woes, of the world in his person, what does it signify, when that offer is accepted, but that God will have his modicum of suffering somehow,—if he lets the guilty go, will yet satisfy himself out of the innocent? In which the divine government, instead of clearing itself, assumes the double ignominy, first, of letting the guilty go, and, secondly, of accepting the sufferings of innocence. In which Calvin, seeing no difficulty, is still able to say, when arguing for Christ's three days in hell, 'It was requisite that he should feel the severity of the divine vengeance, in order to appease the wrath of God and satisfy his justice.' I confess my inability to read this kind of language without a sensation of horror." *

The New School theory, which teaches that God expresses his abhorrence of sin by the sufferings inflicted on Christ, he thus challenges: "I confess my inability to see how an innocent being could ever be set, even for one moment, in the attitude of displeasure under God. If he could lay his frown for one moment on the soul of innocence and virtue, he must be no such being as I have loved and worshipped. . . . Does any one say that he will do it for public govern-

* God in Christ, pp. 195, 196.

mental reasons? No governmental reasons, I answer, can justify even the admission of innocence into a participation of frowns and penal distributions. If consenting innocence says, 'Let the blow fall on me,' precisely then is it for a government to prove its justice, even to the point of sublimity; to reveal the essential, eternal, unmitigable distinction it holds between innocence and sin, by declaring that, as under law and its distributions, it is even impossible to suffer any commutation, any the least confusion of places." *

As to the illustrations of this theory which were sometimes attempted to be drawn from human governments, he makes short work of them. "If Zaleucus, for example, instead of enforcing the statute against his son which required the destruction of both his eyes, thinks to satisfy the law by putting out one of his own eyes and one of his son's, he only practises a very unintelligent fraud upon the law, under pretext of a conscientiously, literal enforcement of it. The statute did not require the loss of two eyes: if it had, the two eyes of a dog would have sufficed; but it required *the* two eyes of the criminal,— that he, as a wrong-doer, should be put into darkness. If the father had consented to have both his own eyes put out in-

* God in Christ, p. 199.

stead of his son's, it might have been very kind of him; but to speak of it as public justice, or as any proper vindication of law, would be impossible. The real truth signified would be that Zaleucus loved public justice too little, in comparison with his exceeding fondness for his son, to let the law have its course, and yet, as if the law stood upon getting two eyes, apart from all justice, too many scruples to release his sin, without losing the two eyes of his body as he had before lost the eyes of his reason.

"According to the supposition, the problem here is to produce an expression of abhorrence to sin, through the sufferings of Christ, in place of another, through the sufferings of the guilty. Now the truth of the latter expression consists in the fact that there is an abhorrence in God to be expressed. But there is no such abhorrence in God toward Christ; and, therefore, if the external expression of Christ's sufferings has no correspondent feeling to be expressed, where lies the truth of the expression? And, if the frown of God lies upon his soul, as we often hear, in the garden and on the cross, how can the frown of God, falling on the soul of innocence, express any truth or any feeling of justice?" *

There it is! The essential immorality of that

* God in Christ, pp. 199, 200.

doctrine of judicial substitution is touched with the spear of Ithuriel, and what is uncovered will never again be hidden. The one thing to which Orthodoxy had clung was the idea that there was a judicial element in this transaction; that suffering (you need not call it penalty) was inflicted by the Father upon the Son to satisfy the ends of general justice. That position Bushnell stormed, and carried. This was his heresy,— this explicit and unflinching denial that there could be in a just government any such thing as a judicial substitution of the innocent for the guilty. The vicariousness of love, the identification of the Saviour with the sinner which involves the Saviour in the woes and pains of the sinner, all this he mightily affirmed; but that the Father in heaven inflicted judicial pains upon his well-beloved Son in order that he might pardon guilty men,— this conception he smote with the wrath of the great love that was kindled in his soul on that February midnight. The motive that inspired him was his passionate sense of the divine justice, his determination to preach none other than a right God,— a God whose judgments would commend themselves to every man's conscience. It was this, and nothing else, that made him a heretic. This was the way by which he went forth from the Congregational

camp, bearing the reproach of Christ. For, although he was not formally cast out of fellowship, there were for him after this many lonely years when not one of his Congregational brethren in Hartford would exchange pulpits with him, when his presence in any ecclesiastical assembly was thought to bring a sort of contagion, and when many hard and false things were continually said of him. Fast friends he had through all these years, even among Congregational ministers; but they were few.

I will not enter into the details of the trial through which he was now forced to go. His own Association of ministers called him to account for heresy, and, after a long and patient examination of his teachings, concluded that, although they were not in accordance with the current Orthodoxy, the divergence was not so great but that he might be tolerated. That verdict was not satisfactory to others outside of his Association, and an attempt was soon made in the State Association to deal with the local Association because of its tenderness toward him. Thus began a long series of endeavors to get him out of the fellowship and to have his doctrines condemned and his name erased from the list of Congregational ministers. These attempts were not successful; but the result of all this was to

make him an object of suspicion, and to withdraw from him almost wholly the sympathy and personal friendship of the great majority of his brethren in the ministry. In 1867, after he had laid down the pastorate, when he was an old man and broken, I invited him to come to North Adams, and preach the sermon at my installation. His answer was a caution, most kindly intended. It would not be politic for me to have him there: I might be compromised by the report that I was his friend. It was quite true: even then the brand of the heretic was upon him; and, although he was respectfully treated by the council which then assembled, it was evident that suspicion of him was still alive in the hearts of his brethren.

This was not due to any bad spirit which he had shown; for, as all do testify, he bore himself, under the attacks which were made upon him in the ecclesiastical bodies, with meekness and wisdom. Respecting the most exciting of these meetings, one minister says, "Of Dr. Bushnell's bearing and spirit I can only recall the general impression that he showed a calm, dignified, Christian spirit, and wonderfully maintained his self-poise." Another says: "Dr. Bushnell bore it patiently and cheerfully; but there were times when he appeared depressed, and keenly felt

the want of confidence his ministerial brethren evinced in their intercourse with him."

All this, let us not forget, was for simply and resolutely contending that the Judge of all the earth will do right, and that no conduct can be imputed to him which involves injustice.

Dr. Bushnell's heresies respecting the Trinity as developed in the New Haven address, sprung from the same source. The chief theological value of the doctrine of the Trinity, as maintained by Calvinistic teachers, was to furnish the *dramatis personæ* for the doctrine of the atonement. For that forensic transaction there must be distinct consciousnesses and wills in the godhead: the consciousness and will of the Judge and Punisher must be different from those of the substitutionary victim. In the speculations about this transaction the language of the theologians often degenerate into stark tritheism, as in Edwards's treatise on the Trinity, in which he constantly speaks of the three "persons" of the godhead as "they," and tells in the most circumstantial way how, in the councils of eternity, "they" conferred and arranged together about how the work of redemption should be carried on. Against all the conceptions which involved such a notion as this, or covertly implied it, Bushnell's intellect as well as his moral sense was at war. He saw

that any proper view of the unity of the godhead would make the forensic explanations of the atonement incredible; and that was one reason why he sought to replace the tritheistic trinity by a trinity of revelation, which held for him the practical truths by which his faith was nourished, and avoided the contradictions which the other doctrine presented both to reason and to faith.

I am not concerned to maintain that Bushnell gave us the final statement either of the doctrine of the vicarious sacrifice or of the doctrine of the Trinity. What I desire to point out is that he eliminated the elements in those doctrines which were an offence to the moral sense of men, and made possible a reconstruction of theology upon a better foundation and in harmony with the ethical convictions and the spiritual needs of men. My own belief is that much of the constructive work that he did is also very valuable. Not only in "Christian Nuture" and in "Nature and the Supernatural," but in his two books on the Atonement, there are interpretations of the spiritual laws which will remain as permanent contributions to Christian thought. I doubt whether any American of the last century has enriched Christian philosophy with a larger number of vital and fruitful suggestions.

Of all this I can say nothing. I have only

tried to show how valiantly he battled for a "right God," how faithfully he kept the knightly vow he made in the hour of his conversion,— to believe in none but a righteous God, and to be faithful to him forever.

I should be guilty of a great omission if I left the impression that Bushnell was the only Christian teacher on this continent who bore witness against those special immoralities of theology with which his name is linked. The Unitarian protest in the earlier part of the last century was mainly a protest against these very immoralities. The metaphysical questions involved were by no means the crucial questions. What Dr. Channing and his associates were most concerned to secure was a moral theology,— a theology which did not offend their deepest ethical convictions by requiring them to ascribe to God principles of action which they believed to be unrighteous. Dr. Munger says: "The immediate source of the movement was a reaction against the inhumanity of Hopkins and Emmons, or more generally against Calvinism, however presented. In short, the movement was not theological, but humanitarian, and was incorrectly named." And Dr. Gordon, in words that are familiar, but that belong here, testifies, "Against a Trinitarianism that was Tritheism, in opposition to a view of the

person of Christ that slighted his humanity and dishonored the Eternal Father, in the face of opinions that made history godless and terrible, that construed salvation as outward, forensic, mechanical, that regarded religion as alien to the nature of man, at war with the intellectual and moral wealth of the world,— the Unitarian protest was wholesome, magnificent, providential."

It is evident, then, that the Unitarians had been fighting the same battle that Bushnell was fighting; and it is more than probable that, if the dogmas against which he began his warfare in 1848 had been modified a generation sooner, the division of the Congregational body would never have taken place. We all honor to-day the fidelity to their ethical convictions of the men who went out from the Congregational camp; but some of us deeply deplore the separation. Always, in such a rupture, not only is love put to shame, but truth suffers: each party magnifies out of due proportion the points for which it contends, and is wont to close its mind against the essential truths which are held by its antagonist. The Orthodox and the Unitarians have both suffered in their way: each party has made more than was profitable of the tenets which it has held as against the other; each has been impoverished by rejecting precious elements cherished by the other.

I wonder if we have not nearly come to the point at which the weapons of controversy can be laid aside and the spirit of criticism give place to the spirit of appreciation; at which the desire to magnify the things wherein we agree, and to discover, each in the treasure of the other, that which we can appropriate and use, shall make us brethren in deed, if not in name. If such a spiritual friendship should bring into closer and more helpful relations the two branches of our Congregational brotherhood, I cannot but feel that good would come to both of them and to the kingdom of the truth. Surely, we need not fear that in such a loving endeavor to understand one another and help one another anything really precious would be lost; for it must be that, when we are working and praying together and bearing one another's burdens, we are more likely to find out the truth as it is in Jesus than when we are engaged in criticism or controversy. And, if the spirit of peace and concord should lead us into closer friendship with each other and with the Lord whose name we bear, we shall all confess that no one has done more than Horace Bushnell to make possible such a consummation.

# VIII

## Hosea Ballou and the Larger Hope

# HOSEA BALLOU AND THE LARGER HOPE.

"How is it," Sir James Mackintosh was once asked by a student of English politics, "that I never hear a word about the blessings of liberty and the glory of the British Constitution in your debates?" "Because," was the reply, "we take all that for granted." So, if one turns to the utterances of those who broke with the orthodoxy of the eighteenth century in asserting the final victory of good over evil, he will find in them comparatively little in defence of the right to religious liberty and freedom of thought and of conscience. The pioneers of the larger hope were also pioneers of religious liberty in America. But they said little about it, because they believed so much in it. They took all that for granted. They were so absorbed in the proclamation of the truth they were called to declare that they had neither the time nor the mind to discuss their right to utter it. They wasted no words in arguing their right to proclaim the larger vision and the higher truth. They broke through the theological bounds, took possession of the new ground, and went to work to clear it

up for permanent occupancy. Their brave self-assertion was in itself the largest sort of victory for liberty. While others took to dissenting about liberty, they took the liberty of dissenting. They ignored all protests, threats, anathemas, and went straight about their task of opening up a theological territory wide enough to take their stand on the love and fatherhood of God, and its assurance of good to the whole family of mankind. They led the pioneer's life; and their lot was one of spiritual privation and intellectual loneliness, with few theological neighbors, and the nearest of these rather distant and reserved. But their little clearing grew; and new settlers began to move in and take up the region round about, and sent word back to the older communities of the spirit that here was a land flowing with religious milk and honey. And the result has been that, after a hundred and more years, immigration has become so fast and forward that the theological heirs of these early settlers are kept busy in the probate court of history, proving priority of occupancy and title. It is always a privilege for one who has entered into their labors to rehearse the story of their protest and its significance, to a jury of candid Christian minds.

There was need, when they began it, of pro-

test and revolt. The atmosphere of the eighteenth century in America was heavy and depressing. One need not accept the extreme and bitter denunciations of the age common to the evangelists who attacked its sins and shortcomings. But, even in the cold light of historic inquiry, the facts do not indicate any theological or spiritual stir and vitality. The religious tendencies were depressing. Professor Williston Walker has written of the times: "Taken as a whole, no century in American religious history has been so barren as the eighteenth. The fire and enthusiasm of Puritanism had died out on both sides of the Atlantic. . . . While New England shone as compared with the spiritual deadness of Old England in the years preceding Wesley, the old fervor and sense of a national mission were gone, conscious conversion, once so common, was unusual, and religion was becoming more formal and external." In spite of repeated revival seasons; in spite of the labors of Wesley and Whitefield and Tennant, with their searching evangelism; in spite of Edwards and Hopkins, whose relentless theology ought to have driven their contemporaries pell-mell to conversion,— the century dragged on without any real touch of heavenly fire, any real accent of the Holy Ghost. It is the opinion of Dr. Walker that, "religiously estimated, even

Boston was not what it had been in the days of its founders. The old Puritan enthusiasm had departed; and, though the Sunday congregations were large and Sunday was observed with a strictness which surprised English visitors, the Thursday lecture, once so popular, was greatly neglected." That was a sure sign of moral degeneracy and recession, and it was the cause of open comment and sorrow. Judge Sewall once noted in his diary, April 16, 1697: "Mr. Cotton Mather gives notice that the lecture is hereafter to begin at Eleven of the Clock, an hour sooner than formerly. Reprov'd the townspeople that attended no better: feared 'twould be an omen of our not enjoying the lecture long, if did not amend." The same state of things seems to have recurred a half-century later. But there must have been amendment, in part at least; for the Thursday lecture persists, in its perennial freshness.

But, whatever laxness may have marked the manners or the observances of the people, there was none whatever in their creed. The old theology held fast, with a tenacity unyielding at any point. How sure men were that it was the very word of God may be inferred from the answer of Samuel Hopkins, when asked, at the end of his life, whether he would make any alterations in

the sentiments expressed in his "System of Divinity." "No," was his stalwart reply, "I am willing to rest my soul on them forever." Its hold must have been deadly, or men would have revolted headlong at the awful preaching of Edwards. The effort to vindicate this mighty man and give him a sweeter repute in our day can never efface the horrors of his theology, nor mitigate the intellectual perversity which could so misread and malign the gospel. "We revolt," says Professor Walker, giving exact references to verify his paraphrases, "as we read Edwards's contention that the wicked are useful simply as objects of the destructive wrath of God; as he beholds the unconverted members of the congregation before him withheld for a brief period by the restraining hand of God from the hell into which they are to fall in their appointed time; as he pictures the damned glowing in endless burning agony, like a spider in the flames; and heightens the happiness of the redeemed by contrast between the felicities of heaven and the eternal torments of the lost, visible forever to the saints in glory." "No wonder," adds the chronicler, "that one of his congregation was led to suicide, and others felt themselves grievously tempted." The unnaturalness of any religious experience born of such preaching is admitted to-day.

There could be no thorough emancipation of the human spirit as long as the intellect was held in the bonds of a religious pessimism so abject. The revivals of the eighteenth century were but the gasping of men's affections for spiritual fresh air, the convulsive throes of souls asphyxiated by the devitalized theology which enveloped them. It is the fashion still to speak of the religious phenomena of Edwards's day in the middle years of the century as "The Great Awakening." The phrase is a misnomer. There was in all this stir no awakening. The churches were only walking in sleep, and dreaming the awful nightmare of Calvinism as they walked.

But the real awakening was at hand. Nightmares are generally the prelude to arousal. A reaction was inevitable. A new spirit was asserting itself in the very heart of the territory thus given over to depression and to fanatical error. Already the heralds were abroad, the forerunners of the kingdom of heaven. The excesses of current theology were working out their own intellectual retribution. All through the strict Calvinistic literature of the century one may read warnings, protests, denunciations, directed against an evil tendency called "Arminianism." It was a word which covered a multitude of sins. It meant very much what "free thinking" stood for fifty

years ago, or what is called "infidelity" to-day. It was the synonym, in the eyes of the rigorously orthodox, for everything which savored of departure from the old standards and customs. Lowell says of a later term, "The word 'transcendental' was the maid of all work for those who could not think"; and in like fashion it may be said that "Arminianism" was used in the same way by all who could not discriminate. But, briefly, it was the designation of the broader spirit which began to show itself in men's minds, in protest against intolerance and irrational theology and narrow spiritual life. Voices were lifted up here and there to deny the perplexing and repulsive theology of the age. Jonathan Mayhew, pastor of the West Church in Boston from 1747 to 1766, was an outspoken Unitarian, and held unmistakably the larger hope for man. Charles Chauncy, the distinguished pastor of the First Church, wrote and spoke voluminously as a champion of the belief in the divine unity, and the salvation of all souls. Jeremy Belknap, for twelve years settled over the Federal Street Church, was an avowed believer in the same liberal faith. Nor was New England the only region where the new voices were heard. Jacob Duché, first chaplain to Congress, and William Smith, the founder of the University of Pennsylvania, were likewise out-

spoken in their liberal views. While in Virginia Robert Yancey, announcing that he would preach a discourse in defence of his faith in universal salvation, was heard by an immense throng, many of whom were provided with ropes and grapevines "to mete out justice to this innovator." But those who came to lynch remained to applaud, and to give consent to the new message.

Thus there was asserting itself in the churches of America here and there, by the lips of scattered witnesses, a testimony to the larger thought of God and of man. But as yet it was unorganized and sporadic, a force which had not begun to concentrate and to mass itself, like the electricity which charges the clouds of a summer sky before they form for the thunder-squall. There was as yet no thought of attacking the old theology by forming a new sect. There was no impulse toward organization, for there was no common ground for these individual protestants. Even John Murray, when he began to preach in this country the doctrines he had imbibed at the feet of James Relly in England, had no thought of creating a new sect, nor of even forming a society, or church, of believers. Indeed, Murray was as good a Calvinist as anybody until he came to "the last things," when he drew the conclusion

of universal salvation instead of the usual one of majority damnation. And he at first preached this heretical conclusion so cautiously, clothing it in such familiar Scripture and in such accepted theological phrases, that he was not suspected of being the arch-heretic he really was. Elhanan Winchester, too, was sufficiently orthodox save in the larger conclusion he drew as to the destiny of the whole human race. The dissentients, the progressives, the "liberals," and the new-puritans were once more repeating the effort, as constant as it is futile, to keep good their place in the familiar and beloved dwellings of orthodoxy, at the same time that they took up their new possessions on the frontiers of truth. And, as always, the effort was foredoomed to fail.

But during the last quarter of the century or thereabouts the stream of liberal tendency in the American churches began to divide along lines of policy and temper; and, curiously enough, the two parties divided in their methods and spirits just as they did in the matter of emphasis upon different phases of the new thought. One was inclined to lay the greater stress upon the unity of the Divine Nature and the right of free inquiry. The other gave greater weight to the doctrine of the Divine Love as the assurance of the final harmony of the whole moral creation. And the

former party were disposed to avoid controversy, eschew preaching directly upon the great theme at issue, and, as Dr. Freeman of Boston once wrote, "content themselves with leading their hearers, by a course of rational but prudent sermons, gradually and insensibly to adopt it." The latter, on the other hand, were outspoken and aggressive from the first, and boldly proclaimed their great hope with a positiveness and a fervor which attracted instant attention and opposition. This was the beginning of that difference in attitude which has divided the forces of Christian liberalism in America, and kept them sundered for a full century. The wing which was destined to form the Unitarian body would say, to use Dr. Atwood's apt statement, "*One* God, the Father." The wing which took up the Universalist position would say, "One God, the *Father*." But the former party would proceed cautiously, make no breach in the churches, would inquire, like Nicodemus, by night, sow the seed secretly, and build the temple of the new faith silently, so that there should be "neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was building." But their allies of the other wing were for blowing the trumpet and warning the people, and, if need be, would "set a man at variance against his father, and the daugh-

ter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."

It was natural that such a difference in temper and method should lead to a different manner of growth in the two parties. Accordingly, we find that those who stood first of all for the larger hope were the more quickly forced to organize, to formulate a fighting faith, to gather their followers and equip them for offence and defence. Their sentence was for open war; and, long before their brethren of the more pacific temper had been driven from the safe and home-like shelter of the old communions, they were an embattled host, determined in their resistance to the old system from which they had escaped, and in a truly apostolic spirit showing again a loyal conformity to the terms of the Great Commission, and ready to be witnesses of the truth "both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." True, they were an ineffective band, unorganized, and without discipline and leadership. As one of their sons in the faith has said, "They were done with Calvinism and were waiting to see what next." But like the patriots a few years before, their brothers and countrymen, who had resisted the doctrines of an overbearing king without knowing whither their boldness would bring them, they

found new light as they went, and the way was opened as they trod in it.

Now there was one man who, first of all the liberal leaders in America, wrought the great ideas which were possessing the minds of many men into something like a definite system, a coherent theology, a rational and related whole. When the Calvinism of Edwards and of Hopkins was almost absolute, and the Arminianism which was merely its negative was either lame in its premises or impotent in its conclusions, this man thought out all the essentials of the great system which was to displace Calvinism as the religion of the masses. Hosea Ballou comes into the view of the student of the Broad Church theology at a time when that theology was little more than an attitude of men's minds. It meant revolt against the harshness which was enthroned under the name of God. It meant denial of the tritheism of the age, and a reaching after a more rational interpretation of the divine nature. It meant a discontent with the pessimistic view of human nature. It meant, in many quarters at least, a rejection of the idea of the doom of the majority, and a brave belief in the salvation of all men. But it was not as yet consistent with itself. It was negative, not positive. It lacked definiteness and logical order and coherency. It was still

little more than an attempt to patch the old garments of traditional orthodoxy, and to put a new spirit into the dried and cracking skins of the obnoxious creeds. But in the thought of Ballou a work of transformation and simplification was going on, more radical than had taken place in the mind of any American theologian. He made his way out of all the bewildering and artificial theology of the schools and the traditions, freeing himself from their sophistries and from their terrors, seeking and finding the light of a higher truth for himself and for all men. In 1805, in his "Treatise on Atonement," Hosea Ballou gave to the world the first American book which embodied the outlines of the Broad Church theology, a religious classic, presenting an original, a simple, a natural account of the meaning of the gospel, which after a hundred years is just becoming the working creed of the church in America.

In 1771, ten years before Channing's birth, thirteen years after Edwards had died, this man was born in Richmond, N.H. His origin was humble, his early life was one of toil, poverty, and scanty resources, both material and intellectual. He had only such schooling as poor boys in country regions could obtain in those days, and a term at a small academy when he was

nineteen. But, as he matured, he began to show the traits of genius which no circumstances could cloud, no obstacles hinder. Like all providential men, he had a power which we cannot account for by anything in his surroundings or his antecedents. His environment only gave direction to his genius: it in no wise accounts for it. His father was a Baptist clergyman, and the lad was reared in the atmosphere of a strict Calvinism. Baptized at eighteen, his interest in the faith he had learned as a child became more lively; and his reflections were greatly stimulated by hearing for the first time the doctrines of one Rev. Caleb Rich, a Baptist preacher whose Calvinism had the new conclusion of universal salvation, and who was making some converts in young Ballou's circle. He had never heard the utterance of the larger hope before. He knew no books or literature upon the subject. He was a lonely soul, wrestling in the dark with the great primal questions of life, of destiny, of human nature, and of God's will. Like many another soul in such plight, he turned with a Puritan simplicity and singleness of heart to the one Book; and with his Bible, his own reason, and the illumining spirit pushed on to conclusions which left him far enough from the faith of his fathers. Let it be remembered that Ballou was as much a "Bible-

man" as Dwight Moody himself. Only he was trying to frame a theology out of what he found in the book, not to find in the book a vindication of his own theories or the traditions of men. Before he was thirty years old, he had found light and peace. The old theology had for him become but a memory. He had rejected every one of its essentials, and had substituted for them a system which anticipated in almost every particular the creed of the Christian liberals of our day. In the "Treatise on Atonement" one finds theology reconstructed, simplified, rationalized, modernized. It was not merely a monograph upon its title theme. It was a restatement in divinity, a revival of the gospel teaching, a comprehensive system of thought. It was the first American book, as its author was the first American theologian, to thoroughly restate the great New Testament teachings, and relate them to the fundamental, radical truth that "God is Love." It asserted the unity of the Divine Nature, and Love as the essence of that Nature, the source of creation's life, the test of all spiritual activities. It taught the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man through sonship to God. It decisively declared the doctrine of salvation by character, rightness in the soul manifested in righteousness in conduct. It was the first of

American books to teach the atonement as the reconciling of man to God,— the doctrine which is so fast obtaining in all the churches, with Bushnell as its putative sponsor. It put the relation of sin to punishment in absolutely new light, declaring it to be instant, constant, inevitable, as cause to effect, as seed to fruitage. And it asserted the final harmony of all souls with God, as the necessary culmination of a universe whose centre and circumference are determined by the love of God.

That was the gist of the "Treatise on Atonement," and that the consistent, perspicuous message of Ballou to his fellow-men. And that message was put forth ten years before Channing and the Unitarians had found their voice, or even their minds. It was in the air a generation before the ordination of Bushnell, and seventy years before Beecher was thundering in Plymouth pulpit, in belated echoes of its mighty notes. All that modern thought holds dearest, its most luminous, most reasonable, most inspiring affirmations, were written aforetime in that epoch-making book. And there was added to these cardinal points of the new theology, that which none but he and the apostles in the larger hope had the courage to believe and to proclaim, but which must always be the conclusion of any system

which begins with the love and fatherhood of God, the prophecy of the

> "One far-off divine event,
> To which the whole creation moves."

It is entirely true that for fifty years before Ballou the elements of this faith had been in the air. Many minds had groped for it, many had almost grasped it. Many voices had been lifted in the wilderness, forerunners of the awakening that was to come. But they had so far fallen short of a comprehensive system, of a logical rationale of the dawning faith. Either they had begun right, but had not thought on to the glorious end, or they had tacked a stupendous conclusion to weak and inadequate premises, or they had built well the arch upon its abutments and left out the keystone. Hosea Ballou was more thorough than any of them, while in him the thoughts of many hearts were revealed. There are always many portents of the dawn before the sun is really up. The light comes in by slow degrees; but at last there is a moment when we cry, "The day!" There were many tokens of the widening sympathies which were one day to fellowship the Gentiles coming to Christ,—Philip preaching to the Ethiopian; Peter's visit to Simon the tanner and to Cornelius; the

mission to the Greeks at Antioch. But the great truth that the gospel was for the Gentile, for any child of God without respect to race or tongue, was never seized in its fulness and power till Paul gave it his aggressive championship. It is not enough that a truth should be in the air: it never becomes effective till somebody takes it out of the air and presses it home upon human hearts and understandings. The religious prophet is the man who has the insight to know what is in the air, and condense it into speech, and precipitate it upon men's hearts. Christianity itself was "in the air" before the star in the East shone over Bethlehem. But it needed the spirit of the Christ himself to realize to men's minds the meaning of these preludes of the truth, and frame it into the harmonies of the gospel. He vitalized the thoughts of many generations, and out of his own spirit gave them like a word original and new to men.

That was Hosea Ballou's great service to America. First, he wrought out a definite thought concerning God and his moral creation. And then he went forth, in the power of the spirit, to preach that thought unto the uttermost parts of the earth. He recognized the real voice of God in the many voices of his time, and

then he lent his own voice reverently to interpret God's voice.

It was the first work of Ballou to convert to his own thought the men of his own party, to make the scattered Universalists of his day accept his new and larger point of view. Nor was it a long nor a difficult task. Within ten years from the issue of the "Treatise" there were but two Trinitarians in the Universalist ministry in America. In the words of John W. Chadwick, "He published his book on the Atonement in 1805, at which time Boston Unitarianism was all latent; and it was not until 1815 that Channing, by his letter in reply to Worcester, obliged his Unitarian friends to show their colors and to pass for what they were. By that time, thanks to Hosea Ballou, the Universalists were a homogeneous anti-trinitarian body." By that time, too, the policy of Ballou and his associates had become definite and unmistakable. They had come to realize that, if they were to prevail and their truth was to gain a hearing and to win the minds of men, they must carry on a vigorous, unremitting, unflinching warfare on its behalf. They perceived how thoroughly the churches were possessed of the gloomy spirit of Calvinism; and they realized, too, with a hard sense which does them credit, that this kind

goeth not out save by fasting and prayer,— yea, and by the exorcism of hard buffeting and relentless contradiction. The revival of early Christian theology was not to come about of itself. It was not an accident: it was a work. No great victory in this world ever happens. It is won. And the winning means toil and warfare, hard blows and stern privations. That truth had come home to the men with the larger hope in their hearts before the end of the eighteenth century. For them, clearly, there was no quarter, as there were no quarters any longer, in the established communions. If they would maintain themselves, an aggressive propaganda was absolutely necessary.

They went forth on their crusade. They were plain people, many of them with small education, but great in their courage, their devotion, and their profound belief in the faith they taught. Like all Protestants of their day, they made the Bible their court of appeal; but they were full of that homely rationalism which insists on reading Scripture through the eyes ot common sense and human sentiment. They believed in religious liberty and the right to private judgment too profoundly to debate about them. Necessity was laid upon them; and it was woe unto them if they preached not that gospel of theirs! They went

to the people. They rallied them in churches when they could, in halls and school-houses and court-rooms when churches were denied them. They cornered those whom they were accustomed to call "the friendly opponent," by which term they meant the average believer in the popular creeds, in the country store and in the stage-coach and in his own house. They made a pulpit of the hay-field and the shoemaker's bench. Their preachers expounded the word, and the laymen passed on the message. Pamphlet, book, and newspaper went from hand to hand. The land was traversed from Maine to Ohio. As numbers increased, churches were organized, houses of worship were reared, organization was effected. They braved the odium of popular distrust and ecclesiastical hatred. They persisted in the face of ostracism and of persecution. They were undaunted by the show of superior numbers and of religious influence. And the result of it all was that the people heard their message. Their seed was sown broadcast.

It is a poor and narrow criticism of their work to-day to say that it was controversial, that it was destructive and polemic and aggressive. It had to be all this, or a great opportunity would have been lost, a great transformation unwrought. There must always be protest and challenge of

the old thought before a lodgment can be found for the new. The rooted and obstinate Calvinism of the eighteenth century could no more have been moved in any other way than the old forests of New England could have been cleared off to make way for its farms and villages, its cities and its shops, without the sharp edge of the axe and the mattock and the industrious brawn of the woodsman behind them. The gentle erosion of disapproving silence and dissenting neutrality would have been about as effectual against the dominant creed as dewfalls in washing away the ledges of Katahdin. This was the rude truth which was forced upon Channing and his associates in 1815. They were compelled to take the very course they had deprecated in the followers of Ballou. But, by the time they were finally embarked as a denomination, he and his comrades had been for forty years carrying on a campaign of aggressive enlightenment.

With the schism in the Congregational churches and the exodus of the Unitarian wing, the men who had been fighting the same battle of ideas looked for the re-enforcement of sympathy of fellowship and of co-operation. They were lonesome, naturally; and they craved spiritual friendship. They were hard pressed, and they would have welcomed moral support. But it never came.

The Unitarian of the early century preferred his brethren from whom he was parted by all his convictions, to the men who stood nearest to him in thought and in theological aim. And the coolness was not unnoted, nor did it pass without protest. There is a pathetic sermon of Hosea Ballou's in which he gently chides the Unitarians of his day, in the mild spirit of the text, "Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee," and, after showing how nearly identical is the faith of these new "come-outers" with his own, wonders that they will not own that they believe in the salvation of all souls, and that they will give no aid nor comfort to those who do. And he mourns that the fraternal courtesies which are freely exchanged by Unitarians with those who count them heretics are withheld from those who would count them as allies. It is a touching witness to the disappointment and yearning of a large heart, consecrated above all things, and especially above all personal ends, to the spread of the gospel of the larger hope and faith in the name of the Infinite Love.

For, beyond all question, the foremost figure of this new crusade, the most commanding and the most forceful, was Hosea Ballou, now of Boston. As his thought, by this time, had won the intellectual assent of his brethren, so his

apostolic spirit and his great genius as a preacher made him easily first among the heralds of the new way. He was one of the greatest preachers America ever had. Wherever he went, heretic though he was, crowds flocked to hear him. His fame grew with his years. Maligned, hated, feared, by the conservatives of his day, he had such charm of speech, such persuasiveness, such self-control and gentleness of spirit, such absolute simplicity of word and thought, that the common people heard him gladly. "The measure of a man," says some one, "is his ability to multiply himself." He left a wonderful record of souls touched by his spirit and illumined by his thought into the freedom of a happier faith. His converts were as the sands of the sea, a multitude no man could number. He pleaded with a logic few could withstand against the harsh and dreary theology of his age. His discourse made the love of God seem credible, and the brotherhood of man seem actual, and the victory of God seem inevitable. He was fairly Socratic in the skill with which he led the objector to his teaching into logical corners whence there was no escape. He was thoroughly Pauline in the zeal with which he proclaimed the broad gospel of the love that never faileth. His dignity was habitual. But it neither withdrew him from his fellow-

men nor hindered for a moment the play of a wit that was warmed by humor, a humor edged with wit.

But the most characteristic of his traits, and that which clings like a rich fragrance about his memory, was the absolute simplicity and homely quaintness of the man. He was a son of the soil of New England. The garb of his mind was plain, his speech was the dialect of the people, his logic the shrewdness of their common sense, piercing at last the sophistries of a thousand years. There is one man in the nation's history in whose class he falls, in temper, in method, in effectiveness. Abraham Lincoln and Hosea Ballou belong in the same *genus*. Both men sprung from the plain people, appealed to the plain people, and uttered the heart of the plain people. Both drew their inspiration, not from the schools, but from experience, and from a first-hand grapple with the great life-problems. Both possessed the same sweet reasonableness, the same indomitable faith, the same unerring perception of the work committed to their hands. And both exercised the same personal charm, the same indisputable sway of inborn leadership. As Lincoln forced the conflict which was to precipitate Civil War, but through that war rebuild the very foundations of the nation, so Ballou brought

on the fighting which was to rend the churches only to reconcile them ultimately on the basis of a higher truth. And, as Lincoln emancipated the nation from the thrall of a slavery which bound two races in common and degrading fetters, so Ballou was the leader in a tremendous liberation of the intellect and spirit of the American Church, and gave back to the Lord's free men the real enjoyment of his fatherhood, withheld from them by a usurping theology since the days of Origen and Clement and Gregory of Nyssa. The lasting claim of Lincoln to the world's honor and homage rests on his unerring perception that the great call of the hour was for the preservation of the Union, and the unswerving and dogged persistence with which he clung to that one aim. The world will yet pay its honors to Ballou for his equally sagacious selection of the supreme issue in theology, and his lifelong labor to convince the American religious world that the heart of the gospel is the assurance of Love at the core of the universe, working through all the ages to an absolute and unqualified success in its purposes.

For this, and nothing less, was the real "Ballou theology" so often supposed to be something less and different. It is one of the puzzles of history how the tradition should have arisen

here in Boston, where Ballou was so long a power and a presence known of all, and among those who heard his speech and read his pages, that the "Ballouian theology" was the mere affirmation of no-future punishment, or even of the salvation of all souls. It was a rounded, mature, and comprehensive scheme of thought; and it was a system which remains untouched in its substance, whatever view be taken of the relation of this life to the next.

One feature of the theology of Ballou has never received the recognition it deserves. It is the spirit running all through it, which reconciles it to the order and law of the rest of the divine administration, which makes it seem one with nature. Dr. Munger has recently declared the secret of Horace Bushnell to be that he saw all things as a part of one great scheme of nature. He quotes as applicable to Bushnell what Harnack said of Luther: "He liberated the natural life and the natural order of things." That was Hosea Ballou's secret as well. He straightened the twists out of the theology of a thousand years, and made it as natural as it came from Jesus' lips. His theology is in harmony with the nature of things other than theological, not at odds with them. It belongs by right in the universe revealed by science. Whatever ground

he took with regard to miracle and the attestation of the gospel, he was fifty years before Parker in the "naturalization of religion." His theology was what Emerson said miracle, as pronounced by the church, was not,— "one with the blowing clover and the falling rain." It is marvellous to see how modern he is in all the substance of his thinking. His speech bears the mark of his times, but not his ideas. His conception of God and his providence, of the great cardinal facts and processes of spiritual life,— sin, repentance, retribution, forgiveness,— nowhere clash with the new thought, but rather anticipate it by a hundred years. So that one can turn back from the pages of Martineau and Emerson, of Savage and of Cone, of Munger and Brooks, to the thought of Ballou, and not experience any change of climate or serious shift of intellectual environment. It is surprising to find how close were his views of sin, of moral evil, of necessity and free will, of penalty, of justice, of the implications of love, to the modern point of view. There is scarcely one of the modern ideas on which you may not see the sign-manual of Hosea Ballou, written more than a century ago.

So we are prepared to see that he was not a man of one idea, and that a narrow one. He did not, as some will have it, make a "special

issue" against the doctrine of eternal punishment, or even against the doctrine of future retribution. The later views he held, exaggerated and misconstrued by those who disliked them, have been seized upon as representing all his thought, and forced into a prominence they do not deserve. In his own view the essential thing about moral retribution is not its duration, but its certainty and its adequacy. And the strength of his thought was put forth to prove, not that men are converted — as he believed — in the early stages of the future life, but that they are disciplined throughout all the days of this present life. He labored to convince the world that "the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth much more the wicked and the sinner." Only he laid the emphasis on the words "shall be recompensed." He insisted, in flat and heroic contradiction to the popular teaching of his time, that the mills of God are grinding here and now; that sin and its penalties are coincident; that every day is judgment day; and that, in the substance of the soul as well as its environment, sin works inevitable and immediate confusion and disorder. The chief odium of his teaching was not on account of his views of the future, but on account of his insistence that the present is the scene of judgment and punishment. That

was an idea abhorrent to the orthodoxy of his time. That it has become a commonplace of later thought is chiefly due to the blows he struck in the early years of the nineteenth century.

But he never lost sight nor grasp of the central truth in his thought, that the fatherhood of God involves the final harmony of all souls. And he deserves the honor of all clear thinkers for the vigor with which he insisted on the premises, and then drew the conclusion. There were many in his day who were faintly discerning the real meaning of God's fatherhood. There were a few who were possessed of the larger faith in "the restitution of all things." But Ballou was the first to link the two ideas in their logical relation, read all their great implications, and argue "the new theology," a hundred years before it was so baptized, from premise to conclusion. And he made men feel the folly of accepting a premise unless they were prepared to go on to the end of the logical process. It was Ballou's teaching that, if God is a father to all men, he owes all a father's care, a father's patience, a father's protection. To have created them for good, and then to have suffered them to come short of that good by an eternity in perdition, would have been the most unfatherly of

acts. He is bound by every consideration we can conceive as binding upon a fatherly heart to secure to them a destiny of salvation. And so the futile though well-meant, efforts of the new theology men to square their theories with their eschatology, and reconcile their doctrine of God's fatherhood with their dogma of endless punishment, would have drawn the sharpest fire from Ballou's unfaltering mind. Had he lived to see the modern attempts to mitigate the horrors of endless perdition in the interests of the fatherly character of God, he would have been quick to perceive and to expose its weakness. For it does not relieve the situation of any of its repellent features to admit the salvation of infants or of the great majority of adults or of good pagans or of those who may repent after the breath has failed and before the spirit has left the body. Neither does it help matters to shut one's eyes to the possible outcome, and resign one's self to a severe agnosticism about the future fate of souls. It does not change the radical relations of the current doctrines of future punishment to the divine love to say that one cherishes an eternal hope — which, if eternally a hope, will never be realized — of the final good of all. These are but temporary halting-places at which the reason bent on and bound for the truth

stops in deference to old prejudice, which gets out of breath in the rapid march away from ancient error. If you take your departure on theological waters from the great truth of God's fatherhood, you make no landfall this side the assurance of the final good of all his children. The Scripture and the philosophy which led Henry Ward Beecher to denounce and to vituperate the Calvinistic dogma of predestination to damnation; which leads Newman Smyth to believe in a chance beyond death for the heathen who have not heard of Christ in life; which made Frederick Farrar eternally hope for the great salvation in which he did not believe,—this Scripture and this reasoning carry the mind straight on to the conclusions of Ballou, that all the family of the One Father will finally rejoice in his love. To decree the damnation of his intelligent creatures is no greater crime in Deity than to permit it; to lose a few souls or a single soul is as dark a blot on Divine Love as to lose ninety-nine one-hundredths of a race; to deny the chance to the home heathen which is accorded to the pagans who live in distant parts is a mockery of the universal justice; and the same ridicule and denunciation of a material hell which are used so unsparingly to-day in so many uneasy pulpits apply with equal cogency to any

doctrine which admits the more awful possibility of the eternity of sin and mental suffering. In short, if you go the mile with Dr. Lyman Abbott in his eager championship of the universal fatherhood of God, you can assign no good reason for not going the twain with Hosea Ballou in his faith in the final holiness of all souls. If you stop short of his glorious conclusion, you do it by main force. You defy the logic which has brought you the length you have gone, and set at naught the principle you have yourself accepted as valid. When we consider how few there are who have either the vision or the courage to look straight on from the beginning of theological truths to the end, we shall have some preparation for estimating the largeness of this man, and his disciples who followed the logic of love to its sublime conclusions.

But let it be said with renewed emphasis that, while the courage and the theological straightforwardness of these men is to be credited with the rapid increase of faith in the final harmony of all souls with God, that was not the only article of their creed, the sole issue they made with the orthodoxy of their day. They were not the prisoners of a solitary idea. They moved in a large field, entirely apart from the creed they had left behind. This could not be said of Murray and

Winchester: it *was* true of Ballou and the following he led, which so soon amounted to a whole denomination. They and their heirs and assigns to the present day were and have been Broad Churchmen, in the widest sense of the term. There is not an idea or a principle which commands the assent of advanced and advancing Christian men to-day, saving the questions of miracle and Biblical criticism, which was not proclaimed for substance of doctrine by the Universalists of the early nineteenth century. They were Unitarian before Channing. They were rational before Hedge. They insisted on the interpretation of the Bible as literature before Matthew Arnold was born. They were asserting and practising liberty of conscience and obedience to the soul's highest instincts long before the men were out of college who met at Emerson's call and were dubbed "The Transcendental Club." They had practically called the Bible "a record of revelation" in the Winchester Confession in 1803, two generations before Dr. Briggs's day. They had grown, garnered, and threshed all the seed which Henry Ward Beecher scattered broadcast before that providential man had escaped from school. The fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the divine nature in the human, salvation by character, love the root of all righteousness in God

and in man,—all these gracious and convincing doctrines were formulated, were defended, were enforced, in the hearts and minds of Americans by the men who held the faith in the salvation of the whole human race, from the time that Hosea Ballou put forth the "Treatise on Atonement" in 1805.

To strive for the establishment of these great conclusions was to have an immense share in the founding of religious liberty. For the true emancipation of the spirit of man is not attained in gaining the right to think: it is delayed until he has learned to think aright. Sometimes he has used his intellectual freedom in philosophical waywardness, and sometimes it has proved a passport straight to pessimism. We are coming to think more sanely of religious liberty in regarding it not as something final, an end to be attained for its own sake, but as a means to an end. We seek truth for the good it will do, the joy it will bring, the deeper life it signifies; and for the same reason we crave the freedom and the right to seek. We want liberty for what it will yield, as opportunity, means, environment.

> "What vantageth the freeman's lot
> If shrine and home he buildeth not,
> And what avails the freest heart
> Except it choose the better part?"

Hosea Ballou enlarged the sphere of religious freedom in America in a double way. He made it easier for men to think the highest things of God, and he made it easier to believe that the things he thought were true. The largeness of his work we are not even yet prepared to appreciate. But one thing is certain. To attempt to write the history of religious liberty in America without the most generous consideration of Hosea Ballou's influence and work, his thought and his missionary labors, is as if we undertook to write the history of political freedom in our country with only casual mention of New England and this "darling town of ours," liberty-loving Boston.

By and by, when there shall be an unprejudiced study of the sources of American religious thought in the nineteenth century, Ballou's name will be rescued from the obscurity into which it has been permitted to lapse, and he will be recognized as the great forerunner of the faith of the twentieth century. He was the clearest thinker of his time, for he saw the inevitable conclusion of the whole matter of theology, even as he penetrated to the heart of the matter, in making the love and fatherhood of God pre-eminent in his thought. He was the most courageous thinker of his time in that he dared to take his stand on the new ground long before the others had nerved themselves to

follow. He was the most comprehensive thinker of his time, as appears from the fact that there is scarcely a point in the subject-matter of the "new theology" which he did not traverse with a sure instinct for the propositions which a hundred years of thought are approving to the Christian world. He was the peer of Channing in the power to discern and to proclaim the will and work of God. He differed from Channing, as Lincoln differed from Daniel Webster. But, as Lincoln's plain words wrought a work which not even Webster's eloquence could compass, so the homespun dialectics of Ballou had a power with the people which not even the shining discourse of Channing could exert. Boston will yet come to a sense of his greatness as a prophet of the larger faith; and side by side with the pastor of old Federal Street she will place the preacher of School Street who for thirty years stood in her borders, a witness to the truth once for all delivered to the saints, with unswerving trust in God and in the reasonableness of his world and in the omnipotence of his love.

"He knew to bide his time,
And can his fame abide,
Still patient in his simple faith sublime,
Till the wise years decide."

# IX

## Ralph Waldo Emerson and the Doctrine of the Divine Immanence

# RALPH WALDO EMERSON AND THE DOCTRINE OF THE DIVINE IMMANENCE.

MANY happy coincidences suggest themselves as we meet at this time and in this place to commemorate the life of Ralph Waldo Emerson. He was the descendant of no less than eight generations of Puritan ministers, and his father's name is on yonder tablet as the fourteenth minister of this ancient church. On a spring evening a hundred years ago this devout and gracious William Emerson wrote in his diary,—"May 25, 1803, this day, whilst I was at dinner at Governor Strong's, my son Ralph Waldo was born." Little did the father realize that this entry marked the most important incident of his twelve years of ministry, or that a century later the twenty-fifth day of May would be observed throughout this and other lands as the hundredth birthday of the most distinguished representative of American literature. In this church, then, with its noble covenant of 1630, still in force, where all that is temporary in religion is omitted and all that is permanent is expressed, in the piety of the parsonage and in its straitened

circumstances after his father's death, in the discipline of the Latin School, amid all the traditions of Puritan simplicity and of Thursday lectures, the boy's inclination to plain living and high thinking was set. "What a debt is ours," he wrote thirty years later, "to that old religion which in the childhood of most of us dwelt like a Sabbath morning in the country of New England, teaching private self-denial and sorrow!" With a peculiar fitness and timeliness this church of his childhood speaks the first of the many words of commemoration which will be heard in this centennial year.

The influence of Emerson has experienced all possible vicissitudes. First came a period of friendly perplexity or embarrassed hostility, when those who felt called to attack his teaching found themselves disarmed by his gracious and unresisting temper. "I esteem it," wrote the saintly Henry Ware, Jr., "particularly unhappy to be thus brought into a sort of public opposition to you; for I have a thousand feelings which draw me toward you. On this account I look . . . with no little sorrow to the course which your mind is taking." The judgment of other contemporaries was less merciful. Professor Alexander, of Princeton, wrote of the Divinity School Address: "We want words with which to ex-

press our sense of the nonsense and impiety which pervade it. It is a rhapsody, obviously in imitation of Thomas Carlyle, . . . but without his genius." The *Christian Examiner* regarded the Address as being "neither good divinity nor good sense"; and the *Daily Advertiser*, in an article attributed to Professor Andrews Norton, remarked: "Silly women and silly young men, it is to be feared, have been drawn away from their Christian faith, if not divorced from all that can properly be called religion." It is interesting to consider what further emphasis Professor Norton, the representative theologian of the Harvard Divinity School, might have added to his words of rebuke if he had been assured that even the least of his successors in the faculty of that school should devote a Thursday lecture in the First Church of Boston to a eulogy of Emerson! The impression made on the Methodist sailor-prophet, Father Taylor, was more confused, but more typical of the general feeling. "Mr. Emerson," said Taylor to Governor Andrew, "is one of the sweetest creatures that God ever made. He must go to heaven when he dies; for, if he went to hell, the devil would not know what to do with him. But he knows no more of the religion of the New Testament than Balaam's ass did of the principles of the Hebrew grammar."

Controversy, however, whether reluctantly proposed or indignantly sought by Emerson's contemporaries, was impossible to him. To attack him was like smiting a feather pillow, which yielded softly and presently took its old shape. No rejoinder or self-defence could be extorted from him. "I could not," he wrote to Henry Ware, "give account of myself if challenged. I could not possibly give you one of the *arguments* you cruelly hint at, on which any doctrine of mine stands. For I do not know what arguments mean in reference to any expression of thought. I delight in telling what I think; but if you ask how I dare to say so, or why it is so, I am the most helpless of men." What could the theological rationalists do with an adversary who retreated behind the defence of helplessness! So fought they as men beating the air. Their contention was with an atmosphere, which could not be argued against, but which must be either excluded or breathed. Even the satisfaction which might be derived from the sense of persecution was banished from Emerson's serene and sagacious mood. "Let me never fall," he wrote in his journal, "into the vulgar mistake of dreaming that I am persecuted whenever I am contradicted. . . . A few sour faces, a few biting paragraphs, are but a cheap expiation for all these shortcomings of mine."

Such a temper of detachment, tranquillity, and patient confidence could not but hasten the second phase of Emerson's influence,— the period of imitation. That efflorescence of romanticism and naturalism which appeared in New England about 1840, and which appropriated to itself — with questionable accuracy — the title of Transcendentalism, was a very varied growth. Sometimes, as in Emerson, it was a genuine application of the philosophy of Kant and Fichte, of Coleridge and Wordsworth. Sometimes it was, as Mr. Frothingham, in his History of Transcendentalism, has remarked, little more than that a "feeling was abroad that all things must be new in a new world." Orestes Brownson wrote in 1840, "All are able to detect the supernatural because all have the supernatural in themselves." Margaret Fuller published *The Dial* from 1840–44; and the "Orphic Sayings" of Alcott bewildered or amused, as the temper of the reader might receive them. The Scriptures of other religions, Chinese, Buddhist, Persian, were for the first time accessible, and enlarged the horizon of religious sympathy and unity. "Tell me, brothers," wrote one of the poets of Transcendentalism, Christopher Cranch,—

> "Tell me, brothers, what are we,
> Spirits bathing in the sea
> Of Deity."

The reversion to simplicity took shape in the Brook Farm enterprise in 1842, where some seventy spirits found a modest substitute for bathing in the sea of Deity in farm labor and high converse by the sluggish brook of West Roxbury. Hawthorne was there for a single month; but, as he frankly wrote, "chopping wood and turning the grindstone all the forenoon disturbs the equilibrium." "A man's soul may be buried under a dung-heap just as well as under a pile of money." "Is it a praiseworthy matter that I have spent five golden months in providing fodder for cows and horses? It is not so!" All these dreams and schemes were laid before Emerson as the high priest of Transcendentalism. Many a young minister, catching the method — or lack of method — of Emerson, but quite unvisited by the spirit of Emerson, cultivated the manner of Orphic utterance, of disconnected aphorism and vague aspiration, talked in a large way of "Socrates, Jesus, and Mohammed," or even of "Socrates, Jesus, and myself," and poured upon his undiscerning and diminishing congregation an unfertilizing stream of Emerson and water. Many a young writer fancied that the secret of Emerson was a trick of style, just as one observer is reported to have said that the power of Phillips Brooks was in the use of his hands; and much prose and

verse was written which had nothing in them of Emerson but his fragmentariness, and, instead of living actors, gave us jerky puppets. Mystics like Jones Very sought out the seer at Concord. Reformers came to discuss Brook Farm or the still more helpless scheme of Fruitlands. All these issues and echoes of Transcendentalism, however, were confronted by the singular sanity and serenity of Emerson's mind. He could not be induced to become a fanatic, a communist, a vegetarian, a Delphic oracle, or a come-outer. He disappointed many an agitator. He was a conservative among the apostles of the "Newness." "At the name of a society," he wrote, "all my repulsions play, all my quills rise." "I wished," he said of Brook Farm, "to be thawed, to be made nobly mad; . . . but this scheme was only arithmetic and comfort. . . . Not once could I be inflamed: . . . my voice faltered and fell." Jones Very charged him with coldness. "You see the truth better than others, yet I felt that your spirit was not quite right. It was as if a vein of cold air blew across me." What really met the young poet's hectic mood was a vein of wisdom and restraint, an air of Yankee shrewdness, which like a keen wind across the Concord meadows swept away from Emerson all unhealthy introspection, and kept him rugged, sagacious, alert, con-

trolled, the despair of imitators and the disappointment of the dreamers and schemers of his day.

As the influence of Emerson receded a little into the region of history, still another attitude of mind concerning him became conspicuous,— the attitude of criticism. Sometimes it approached the manner of condescension, as in the judgment of Matthew Arnold: "Emerson is not one of the great poets, the great writers. Emerson cannot be called with justice a great philosophical writer." Sometimes it has a more audacious air of patronage, as when an American critic remarks that Emerson, "had the juvenile pedantry of renascent New England," and "was limited by the national inexperience." Sometimes it is the frank confession of the man of system that the man without a system is not the man for him. This is the impression made on so great and so sympathetic a critic as Martineau. "The failure of coherent continuity of thought," writes Martineau of Emerson "leaves his fine material in an unorganized and fathomless condition. Much as I love the man, I seek in vain to learn from him. The fault is probably in me."

But what has been the fate of Emerson's influence, as it has thus survived these periods of hostility, of imitation, and of criticism? Ob-

viously, it has been a steadily growing influence. The spiritual life of the modern world finds itself more and more nourished by Emerson's writings. His cardinal doctrine, which once appeared to many critics perilous to Christian faith, has become the common property of all rational Christians; and, while more than one system of philosophy has had its day and ceased to be, the loosely scattered seed of Emerson's prose and verse, though much of it fell on stony and shallow ground, has found an increasing area of congenial soil and an abundant harvest. In the year 1870 I happened to be one of the very small group of college students who listened to the only course of Emerson's lectures which made any attempt at academic form. In these university lectures, where, if anywhere, one should look for conscious system, and which made one part of a scheme of graduate instruction in philosophy, Emerson began by disclaiming any attempt at system. "System-makers," he said, were "gnats grasping the universe." What he had to offer was but "anecdotes of the intellect," a "farmer's almanac of mental moods," "a tally of things to thoughts." We were to "watch the stream of thought, running along by it a little way," but seeing only a little, knowing that "the stream is hollowing out its own bed." I can well recall

the hopelessness with which the young note-takers, fresh from one course on the British Logician and another on the Critique of the Pure Reason, closed their note-books with a sense of being let out of school, and ran gladly along by the stream of thought, while this serene observer pointed out its eddies and shallows, its destiny and obstacles, its light and shade. "This subject," concludes one lecture, "is to be finished next time"; and the dingy note-book comments flippantly, "To what subject does he here refer?" Yet here is the strange conclusion of this unacademic, unscholastic influence,— that, when thirty years later Harvard University seeks for a name to set on a building to be devoted to philosophy, it is the name of Emerson which seems most representative of the intellectual ideals of America. Psychologists and metaphysicians, teachers of theology and of sociology, men of the academic habit and of technical discipline, all have agreed that the comprehensive purpose of philosophy will be best indicated by the recognition of insight, sagacity, and fearlessness as the conditions of philosophic progress, and of ethical idealism as its goal, and that these fundamental principles will find peculiar inspiration in a building which shall be known as "Emerson Hall."

What then, we ask ourselves, are the characteristics which through all these vicissitudes of opposition and criticism have perpetuated the influence of Emerson and made him, as Matthew Arnold said, "the friend and aider of those who would walk in the spirit"? How is it that Emerson is a prophet of religious liberty? What is the way of spiritual freedom which he has shown, and whither does it lead? Dismissing for the moment our literary judgments of Emerson as essayist or poet, guarding ourselves from the charm of incidental aphorisms and the distinction of occasional thoughts, what is it that has penetrated religion and philosophy like an atmosphere, and has invited thousands of hearts to throw open their doors of welcome, as when one stands upon his threshold and breathes the morning air of the first day of approaching spring? It might be anticipated that an answer to this question would be by no means easy to reach. Climatic influences are difficult to analyze. An atmosphere is lost when it is decomposed. It would seem to be as hard to fix and define the shifting occasionalism of Emerson as to report all the moods and gusts and clouds and sunshine of a New England April day. This diversity, however, is but the form of Emerson's teaching. Beneath it lies an unusual singleness, one might

almost say, a monotone of thought. It is as if in our shifting spring one kept a thermometer where it was sheltered from sudden changes, and was surprised to find the temperature of the day so nearly uniform. That which gave to Emerson his sense of power, and made him able to say, "If the single man plant himself on his instinct and there abide, the whole world will come round to him," was his confidence in two fundamental principles, which became clear to him — one might almost say, seemed were revealed to him — in early life, and which sustained him throughout his career. It is, in fact, quite startling to recall how young a man he was when he first clearly announced these principles. "Nature," appeared in 1836, when its author was but thirty-three years old; the first Phi Beta Kappa oration, in 1837; the Divinity School Address, in 1838; the lectures on "The Present Age," in 1839; those on "The Times," in 1841; and in these early writings the doctrine of Emerson concerning man, God, life, and duty, is set forth with such lucidity and absoluteness that nothing was left for his remaining forty years of life but to amplify, apply, illustrate, and reiterate, with infinitely varying notes of expression, the creed he had so soon attained. His career was like some great work of thematic music, where the fundamental move-

ment is first boldly struck, and then, with an increasing richness as the various instruments take up the theme, the original *motif* is heard through all the diversities and complexities of the master's art. And what were these two spiritual axioms which were announced before Emerson was forty years old; the themes on which his thought, like an artist's fingers, dwells with loving reiteration, and to which, when he is seventy-six years old, he returns in his lectures on "The Preacher," as an initial theme is restated at a symphony's close? They were: first, the principle that truth should be detached from personality,— the doctrine that the soul knows no persons; and, secondly, the principle of the present revelation,— the doctrine of the immanence of God. Let us try to estimate the significance and permanence of these two foundations of Emerson's thought, which are distinguished by him as cause and consequence, but which in reality appear to be simply the negative and the positive aspects of a single truth.

The doctrine that the soul knows no persons is a negative proposition. It is a protest against the substitution of the person of Jesus for the ideals of the soul as the source of spiritual power. "Christianity," Emerson says, "as it is commonly

taught, is not the doctrine of the soul, but an exaggeration of the personal." "It has dwelt, it dwells, with noxious exaggerations about the person of Jesus." "By his holy thought Jesus serves us, and thus only." "The preachers do not see that they make his gospel not glad." "Do not degrade the life and dialogue of Christ . . . by insulation and peculiarity. Let them lie as they befell, alive and warm, part of human life and of the landscape and of the cheerful day." It was a protest which the New England Protestantism of fifty years ago needed to hear. Provincialism and Pharisaism threatened both Evangelical and Unitarian preaching. "Admiration for [Christ]," said Emerson, "runs away with reverence for the human soul, . . . and inclines the manly reader to lay down the New Testament, to take up the Pagan philosophers." "The base doctrine of the majority of voices usurps the place of [immediate inspiration]; and miracles, prophecy, poetry, the ideal life, the holy life, exist as ancient history merely." "The idioms of [Christ's] language . . . have usurped the place of his truth, and the churches are built not on his principles, but on his 'tropes.'" Thus, what has come to be called a "Christocentric" theology appeared to Emerson both degrading of the nature of Christ and restrictive of the

nature of man. Yet, when this reaction from traditionalism was enlarged by Emerson into a positive axiom, it became a doctrine which religious thought during the last fifty years has largely outgrown. To advance from the historical proposition that Jesus is a spiritual leader rather than a dogmatic authority to the philosophical proposition that the soul knows no persons is to take a long step. It is one thing to fix the place of Jesus in history: it is quite another thing to eliminate the person of Jesus from the movement of history. Yet this seemed the step which Emerson was inclined to take, and this was certainly the inference which less guarded minds derived from the doctrine that "the soul knows no persons." "The dogma of the mystic office of Christ being dropped," . . . said Emerson, "'tis impossible to maintain the old emphasis on his personality; and it recedes, as all persons must, before the sublimity of the moral laws." Much more sweepingly Theodore Parker affirmed: "It is hard to see why the great truths of Christianity rest on the personal authority of Jesus more than the axioms of geometry rest on the personal experience of Euclid or Archimedes." And in his later edition he added, in more audacious form, "If Christianity be true at all, it would be just as true if Herod or Catiline had

taught it." This detachment of truth from persons became the shibboleth of Transcendentalism, and what in Emerson was a trumpet-call to the defence of the human soul became in others a shrill scream of ignorant egotism. The new and imperfect acquaintance with Oriental religions contributed to this emancipation from the Christian tradition. It was vaguely fancied that these other Scriptures met needs of the heart which Christianity did not satisfy, and that religion, to be free, must be detached from the person of Jesus. I remember a fellow-student of theology whose soul still wanted a person to interpret it, but who had read just enough fragments of Emerson to make him fancy that Christian loyalty was getting old-fashioned, saying to me one day, "I have found the Messiah!" "And who is he?" I asked. "Zoroaster," he answered without even a smile.

What is the historical outcome of this aspect of Transcendentalism? I think we must conclude that it represented a temporary reaction of thought, and that the process of the years has brought us where — whatever may be held of the truths of science, as independent of the character of scientific men — the detachment of truth from personality in matters of ethical and spiritual concerns is seen to be impossible. The

whole movement of thought during the last generation renews the assurance that progress is made through personality; that, instead of the soul knowing no persons, the soul is known best through persons; that spiritual truth must be discerned by spiritual men; that, as Bunsen said, "personality is the lever of history"; that, as Phillips Brooks constantly affirmed, "every man's power is his idea multiplied and projected through his personality." It is the reward of the pure in heart, says Jesus, that they shall see God. The vision of the perfect truth is reserved for the perfect man. The lens of the instrument must be pure before the stars come into view. Character creates insight. The truth is inseparable from the person. This is a teaching which the influence of Jesus himself illustrates and confirms. Nothing could more distort the gospel than to say that "Christianity would be just as true if Herod or Catiline had taught it," for it is impossible to conceive that they should have taught it. Herod was not likely to say, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," or Catiline, "Turn the other cheek also." The teaching of Jesus, alike for those who heard it and for those who read it, is an expression of the character of Jesus. The person incarnates the truth. The word is made flesh. The loyalty of the Christian

world is not to impersonal truth, but to truth expressed through personality.

This interdependence of the message and the man make the whole history of ethical and religious thought. The truth that interprets, strengthens, makes free, has behind it the free, strong interpreter. No spiritual message can permanently direct the world which does not issue from a true pure life. The soul of the world not only knows persons, but knows no other guides. Indeed, no finer witness of this spiritual principle can be named than Emerson himself. Incisive, illuminating, enlarging as his message is, who can separate it from the person which, on every page, is so unconsciously disclosed,— the unworldly, detached, serene, grave, yet smiling master? Who does not recognize that the thought of Emerson is directed by his character, that the soul of his writings is the soul of a person, that the purity of his heart gives him discernment of the Eternal? Here, in fact, is Emerson's own proof of immortality, in verses which to thoughtful readers have brought more rational consolation in sorrow than perhaps any word since the New Testament. The whole argument of the "Threnody" is based upon the principle of personality. Emerson had seen in his home the spiritual traits which

must survive and remain recognizable. This, he wrote, is

> " The verdict which accumulates
> From lengthening scroll of human fates,
> Saying, *What is excellent*,
> *As God lives, is permanent;*
> *Hearts are dust, hearts' loves remain,*
> *Heart's love will meet thee again!* "

In an unpublished address of Phillips Brooks, he remarks, " What impresses us most in the most God-like men we ever see is the inability to tell in them what of their power is intellectual and what is moral." That was precisely what impressed one in Phillips Brooks himself, and what perplexed those who debated whether he should be called a thinker or merely a noble person. He was both. The peculiar refinement and insight of his thought proceeded from the peculiar elevation and discipline of his character. The unflecked lens permitted the larger view. The pure in heart saw God. It was the same with Emerson. Out from behind his wise judgment comes the wise, shrewd, observant teacher. When he says, " That is best which gives me to myself," we believe it, because he thus possessed himself and needed few other possessions. How could he teach sanity, patience, the dignity of

common things, the law of the scholar's life, the divinity of the natural man, if he had not made these principles the habits of his life, the companions of his daily walks, the marks of his own character? In a passage in "Nature" it seems to be rather the person that makes the truth than the truth which uses persons. "We create," he writes, "our own world through the perfection of our own soul." "Talent," he goes on in his essay on "Worship," "links with character." "The moment of your loss of faith will be the solstice of genius." Emerson, in short, is a singular contradiction of the thesis that the soul knows no persons; for his influence is in the highest degree that of a person, of whose unstained and responsive soul the essay and the poem are the disclosure and expression.

The doctrine that the soul knows no person would seem, then, to be difficult to maintain. Indeed there are many indications that Emerson himself felt no command to follow the logic of his phrase. Other minds — more systematic perhaps, but less sagacious — might use his doctrine to depreciate the personality of Jesus or to deny the personality of God, but neither criticism nor pantheism disturbed the balance of Emerson's thought. His recognition of the spiritual leadership of Jesus Christ is glad and un-

restrained. "Alone in all history," he says, "Jesus estimated the greatness of men. Having seen that the law in us is commanding, he would not suffer it to be commanded. Boldly with hand and heart and life he declared it was God. [His] name is not so much written as ploughed into the history of the world." He was "the only soul in history who has appreciated the worth of man." "All the maxims of Christ are true to the core of the world." "Since the parrot-world will be swift to renounce the name of Christ, . . . it behooves the lover of God to love that lover of God." The same reverence for personality appears in his thought of God. "I cannot find," he says, indeed, "any truth in saying that God is personal." But why is the soul of things thus impersonal to Emerson? It is because he defines personality by limitation. "To represent God as an individual," he says, "is to shut him out of my consciousness. He is then but a great man. I feel that there is some profanation in saying he is personal." Yet in the same passage of his journal he reaffirms the higher personality. "I deny personality to God, because it is too little, not too much. . . . [He is] the life of life, the reason of reason, the love of love." Here there is no thought of a soul without a person, but only the expression of a doubt con-

cerning the use of a word, as of one who had perhaps read the dictum of Strauss: "Personality is separated existence. The absolute is the all-embracing. . . . Absolute personality is thus a contradiction in terms." How welcome to Emerson would have been the movement of modern philosophy which finds in Lotze its best expression, and in which personality appears not as a sign of limitation, but of completeness, and can be affirmed not of the fragmentary conditions of human life, but only of the completeness and continuity of God! "Personality," says Lotze, in the final words of his great work, "can be complete in an infinite being only: . . . of the personality of finite beings we have little right to speak. It is an ideal. Like every ideal, it is in its fulness his only who is infinite; and, like every perfect good, it is ours only conditionally and imperfectly to share."

It may then be surmised that the doctrine of Emerson which detaches truth from personality was not the teaching which most shaped his thought; and it is quite evident that the later progress of religious philosophy has led to a new appreciation of the personal element in God, in Christ, in history, in philosophy, in modern life. When we turn, however, to the second principle of Emerson's spiritual philosophy, our judgment

must be quite reversed; for here we meet the positive, abiding, timeless aspect of his thought. "Men have come," says Emerson, "to speak of the revelation as somewhat long ago given and done, as if God were dead." Over against a backward-looking, historical, unassimilated faith Emerson presents the human soul, the moral law, the present, immanent, self-revealing God. "The poor Jews," he wrote, "of the wilderness, cried: Let not the Lord speak to us; let Moses speak to us. But the simple and sincere soul makes the contrary prayer: Let no intruder come between Thee and me; let me know it is Thy will, and I ask no more." "The nameless Thought, the nameless Power, the super-personal Heart,—[we] shall repose in that." In a word, Emerson is a mystic, one of that long succession of teachers of all religious faiths who are witnesses of the present Holy Spirit, the life of God in the soul of man. Extravagant, excessive, ecstatic, quietistic, unappreciative of the life of thought and conduct may mystics have been; yet they form a thread of the pure gold of natural piety, which runs through the whole fabric of religious history, and gives it richness, beauty, and strength. Hindu Yogis and Greek ascetics, neo-Platonists and Persian Sufis, mediæval priests and French Quietists, English Quakers and German Romanti-

cists,— a strange procession they make as they march across the stage of history, with their different garb and actions, their various habits and dreams; yet all unite in the one confession that without mediation or indirection, the spirit of the Eternal speaks to the waiting mind of man. Whether it be Philo, the Jew, affirming that "Contemplation of the divine essence is the noblest exercise of man," or a Christian Platonist repeating, "The soul receives the hidden word which God utters in the inward place," or the unknown mediæval author of the "Theologia Germanica," — the book which Luther set next to the Bible and Saint Augustine,— saying, "He who is imbued with the eternal light . . . is a partaker of the divine nature"; whether it be Jacob Boehme, saying, "The spirit of man contains a spark from the power and light of God," or Madame Guyon writing in her autobiography, "My soul passed wholly and altogether into its God, even as a little drop of water cast into the sea receives the qualities of the sea," — it is all one song of confident, personal faith; and this lyric of the soul is taken up in grave, restrained, yet unfaltering utterance by Emerson. "The relations of the soul to the Divine spirit," he says, "are so pure that it is profane to seek to interpose helps." "Whenever a mind is simple

and receives a Divine wisdom, old things pass away." "God builds his temple in the heart." "In all ages, to all men it saith, I am, and he who hears it feels the impiety of wandering from this revelation to any record or any rival."

Emerson, then, is a mystic. It is one of the most curious and instructive facts in religious history that each vigorous movement of spiritual progress, having had its era of theological reconstruction, emerges at last into some expression of mysticism. It is like a plant that first takes firm root upon the earth and slowly develops its hard stem, and then, as if by the miracle of a single night, blooms in a flower which seems of quite another nature from the stalk on which it grew. Out of the formal theology and ritual of the Mediæval Church bloomed one day the beauty of Tauler's preaching; out of the severity of English Puritanism started the consciousness of the Inner Light in George Fox; out of the New England tradition of conscientious self-examination and individual responsibility bloomed the mysticism of Emerson. It is impossible to detach the flower from its stock or to conceive of Emerson as without a root in the Puritan tradition. Differ as he may from the Puritan theology, he could have appeared nowhere else than in a Puritan Church.

"We love the venerable house
Our fathers built to God,"

says Emerson's hymn. He is a product of New England Congregationalism. His roots were in this Church. The movement of religious liberty had here its rugged growth of thought and conduct, and at last bloomed in the fragrant flower of the mystic's creed.

Emerson is a mystic. That is the quality which to many minds makes him ineffective, perplexing, self-contradictory, unconvincing. They ask for orderliness, and he gives them paragraphs where each phrase is, as he said, "an infinitely repelling particle." They look for argument, and he replies that he does not know what argument means when applied to a matter of thought. They doubt his affirmation of the Eternal, and he makes of their very doubt a witness of his God: —

"They reckon ill who leave me out;
When me they fly, I am the wings;
I am the doubter and the doubt,
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings."

Thus to the rationalist, the system-maker, the "understanding" of man, — to use Emerson's free adaptation of German philosophy, — as distinguished from the reason, the mystic, with

his assurance of things not seen or proved, his indifference to history, tradition, and association, his open vision of the present God, remains uninterpretable, illogical, misleading, a philosophical paradox, an eddy in the main movement of religious history. Yet, on the other hand, here is the quality which to thousands of readers gives Emerson a unique place among the prophets of the soul. The mystic does not guess or prove or laboriously infer from the records of the past. He knows, he sees, he experiences; and his report of God is as immediate and spontaneous as his report of the song of birds in the Walden woods. "It is a blessed thing," said Phillips Brooks, "that in all times there have always been men to whom religion has not presented itself as a system of doctrines, but as an elemental life in which the soul of man comes into very direct and close communion with the soul of God." That is what draws many a troubled mind to Emerson. Amid the conflict of the churches and the contentions of the creeds and the uncertainties of history here is a teacher who is sure of himself, unruffled and serene, cheerful and sane. The temples where men have tried to find God may seem to lose their holiness; but Emerson says with Saint Paul, "The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." The sense of mean-

ing, beauty, communication, may have seemed to desert the universe, so that one cries, "There is no speech or language, their voice is not heard"; but Emerson answers, "Within man is the soul of the Holy, the wise Silence, the universal Heart, the eternal One." There is a quality of timelessness in mysticism. When it sings of that:—

> "Vision where all form
> In one only form dissolves,"

one can hardly guess whether it is the voice of Eckhart or of Emerson. When it makes its confession,

> "There the holy essence rolls
> One through separated souls,"

one hardly knows whether this is a hymn of Alexandria or of Concord. The mystic in every age is the consolation and support of moods to which few thoughtful minds fail to rise, when poetry has seemed more true than prose, and imagination the open path to reality, and the soul in its solitude has touched the Eternal; and, as Emerson sings,—

> "Over me soared the eternal sky,
> Full of light and of deity;
> Beauty through my senses stole,
> I yielded myself to the perfect whole."

As one considers the subject of these Thursday Lectures on the History of Religious Liberty, and reviews the names which represent that history in the United States, it is interesting to speculate as to the personalities and influences which are likely to survive. What personalities in American life, one asks himself, may be reasonably defined as world-personalities in the history of religion, and, among these, which are the influences that are likely to be constructive forces in the religion of the future? It must be answered that the contribution of this country to such spiritual leadership is small. The names which naturally suggest themselves belong, for the most part, to special epochs or special communions rather than to the race; and, as the issues of one age or church are historically determined, these masters are rather reverenced than read, and their works are crowned with honor, and with dust. Out of the early history there emerges but one personal influence which still affects, in any considerable degree, the religious world,— the influence of Jonathan Edwards. But the spiritual vision and devout illumination of Edwards, though they stamp him as of the highest order of religious genius, are so inextricably involved with the history of Calvinism that, with the decline of general confidence in that theology, the work

of Edwards recedes into history, and offers but slight spiritual nourishment to the thought of the modern world. The nineteenth century in the United States bore many men of spiritual power; but, for the most part, their influence has had necessary limitations. Bushnell's thought has experienced a steadily expanding influence; and his doctrine of Christian nurture is now, for the first time, obtaining just recognition and acceptance; but Bushnell's work was so largely devoted to the correction and enrichment of the specific doctrines of New England theology that its effect has been felt in the history of doctrine rather than in the literature of universal religion. Beecher, the most gifted of American preachers, stirred his generation to the love of man, of country, and of God; but the vocation of a preacher, while it permits the joy of a profound immediate effect, almost necessarily involves a transitoriness of influence, and the words of Beecher, in part because they expressed with such precision the heart of his own time, must accept the preacher's fate of temporariness. Theodore Parker's vocation, though fortified by learning and passion, was that of warfare among the special conflicts of his own age; and his work may be remembered under the title which is written on the grave of Lassalle,—"Thinker and fighter."

It is difficult for those who have hung upon the passionate eloquence of Phillips Brooks to believe that his influence also must share the fate of the preacher's calling. Wherever his majestic presence stood and the contagion of his faith was felt, the world will never seem again without illumination; and the lift of this whole community to a higher spiritual level and a broader horizon of truth is a gain which cannot be lost. It was quite within his power to become a great constructive theologian, and more than once he turned with eagerness to opportunities for this career; but he was held by circumstances to the preacher's vocation, and his place in our religious history seems to be not that of a theologian or reformer, but, as he would perhaps most desire, that of the consummate flower of modern Christian prophecy.

There remain but two names in the religious history of the United States which may be reasonably expected to have a permanent place in the religious literature of the world The significance of Channing is obscured in this community by his relation to a single body of Christians. To read him has seemed dangerous to many who disapprove of Unitarianism, and superfluous to those who are already Unitarian. Few Boston Unitarians of this generation would hesitate to name

Channing as their representative; but fewer still, perhaps, have read him. It is necessary to stand a long way off from these local issues to see Channing at his full size. When the Chevalier Bunsen, in his great work, was describing "The Progress of Man's Faith in the Moral Order of the World through the Personalities of History," he remarked: "We pass to consider the prophet of man's religious consciousness to the United States,— Channing." "Channing is an antique hero with a Christian heart." "He is a man like a Hellene, a citizen like a Roman, a Christian like an apostle." That is the impression made on great numbers of thoughtful minds in many countries, as they read one of the many translations of this calm interpreter of the duty of man and the nature of God. The dominating influence of Channing on the preaching and philanthropy of the present time is like the round dome of a mountain, which does not show its height until one stands where he can see the outline of the whole range of lesser hills. The other spiritual influence which is evidently increasing in importance as the years go by, is that of Emerson. It is vain to consider which of these men was the greater. It is like debating the merits of Greek and Gothic architecture. Channing is classic, symmetrical, convincing,

noble; and to many minds his Hellenic spirit best expresses the perfect plan of life. But temperaments there always are, and leaping instincts in the most temperate of minds, which respond to the Gothic ideal, the daring, visionary, high-vaulted, imaginative, mystic reach of the soul.

"The Grecian," says Mr. Lowell,

> "gluts me with its perfectness,
> Unanswerable as Euclid, self-contained,
> The one thing perfect in this hasty world.
> . . . . . .
> But ah! this other, this that never ends,
> Still climbing, luring fancy still to climb,
> . . . . . .
> Imagination's very self in stone.
> With one long sigh of infinite release,
> I looked, and owned myself a happy Goth."

It is the very daring of the art of Emerson, the richness of each fragment, the lift of thought, even the dimness of expression, like the dim vista of a Gothic aisle, that make him the quieting resort of many a troubled mind. One enters Emerson, and the noise of business and ambition ceases. "Why so hot, little man?" say the cool, dark sentences; and the slighter incidents of life let go their hold as one sits in the dark and owns himself a happy Goth.

# X

# Theodore Parker and the Naturalization of Religion

# THEODORE PARKER AND THE NATURALIZATION OF RELIGION.

In his recent book on "What is Christianity?" Professor Harnack wrote these words: "How often and often in the history of religion has there been a tendency to do away with some traditional form of doctrine or ritual which has ceased to satisfy inwardly, but to do away with it by giving a new interpretation! The endeavor seems to be succeeding: the temper and the knowledge prevailing at the moment are favorable to it,— when, lo and behold, the old meaning suddenly comes back again. The actual words of the liturgy, of the official doctrine, prove stronger than anything else. . . . There is no tougher or more conservative fabric than a properly constituted religion: it can yield to a higher phase only by being abolished. No permanent effect could be expected in the apostolic age from the twisting and turning of the Law so as to make room for the new faith side by side with it, or so to approximate the old religion to that faith. Some one had to stand up and say, 'The old is done away'; he had to

brand any further pursuit of it as a sin; he had to show that all things had become new. The man who did that was the apostle Paul, and it is in having done it that his greatness in the history of the world consists."

Eighteen hundred years later the need again clamored for a champion. Some one had to stand up and say, "The old is done away"; he had to brand any further pursuit of it as a sin; he had to show that all things had become new. The man who did that in the later days was Theodore Parker, and it is in having done it that his greatness consists.

Consider the theological position here in New England in 1841, four years after he had entered the ministry, the very year in which he delivered his famous "Discourses on Matters pertaining to Religion."

The earlier preaching of the Unitarians had driven the orthodox ministers to a more definite and tense holding of their opinions. They had drawn their skirts more closely about them lest they be accused of touching the unclean heresy with so much as the hem of their garment. They declared their doctrines with more than usual unction. Lyman Beecher had come to Boston with the express purpose of denouncing and refuting Unitarianism on its own ground. Young

Parker attended his ministrations for a year. Possibly this experience added material for his later feeling; for he confessed that "the notorious dulness of the Sunday services, their mechanical character, the poverty and insignificance of the sermons, the unnaturalness and uncertainty of the doctrines preached on the authority of a 'divine and infallible revelation,' the lifelessness of public prayers, and the consequent heedlessness of the congregation,— all tended to turn a young man off from becoming a minister." This preaching was artificial, philosophical, dogmatic. It was not lacking in fervor and emotion; but it was the proclamation of a system rather than of a life; and as such was repugnant to this man whose arteries throbbed with warm, red blood.

On the other hand, he found among the Unitarians much of what was unreal to him. There was a use of conventional theological vocabulary, and the practice of many of the ancient customs and usages. He felt that they had not yet freed themselves from the very orthodoxy against which they contended. They were hatched, indeed; but to many of them the shell still clung in patches. They used the old words, but with new interpretations. This imparted a sort of fuzziness to the edges of their thought which both confused and irritated Parker.

He had no terms of refined Latinity for sin, nor had he the slightest inclination to call a spade a "useful agricultural implement employed in excavations." Moreover, he found the Unitarians at variance among themselves,— at one in their main contentions with orthodoxy, but widely separated on the positive statements of their belief.

Parker clarified the situation by driving the orthodox into a more concentrated position, and by demanding from the Unitarians more exact statements of their ambiguous terminology. If the orthodox were to link his name with that of Voltaire and Tom Paine, and call him "infidel" and "atheist," at least they knew why they did so. If Unitarians found it often difficult and sometimes impossible to exchange pulpits with him, they, too, at least knew why.

It is said that a solution of rock-salt will pass from the liquid to the crystallized state if touched at the right moment by something outside itself. Such a transformation was effected in the fluid theological opinions by the great South Boston sermon on "The Transient and Permanent in Christianity." It was delivered in May, 1841, on the occasion of the ordination of Mr. Shackford, and was heard by many ministers. The effect was tremendous. Boston was thrown into

uproar like that in the city of old, when men threw dust into the air and shouted long and loud in praise of their ancient gods. It became a "test of faith to exchange pulpits with him."

The Boston Association of Ministers debated the question whether he were a Christian, and should he not be expelled, but were mercifully restrained from formal action. Four years later Parker addressed a letter to this Association, asking for definitions of four terms,—salvation, miracle, inspiration, revelation. This letter called forth a host of replies, many of them sharp and stringent, some of them satirical, a few of them courteous and discriminating, but all of them regretting the way in which Mr. Parker handled sacred themes; for he had translated the time-honored and ancient terminology into the vernacular. That this should seem to them so blameworthy indicated the validity of his contention.

Perhaps this will suffice for the present to justify the quotation from Harnack with which I began. "Some one had to stand up and say, 'The old is done away'; he had to brand any further pursuit of it as a sin; he had to show that all things had become new." Of course, he was dreaded and misunderstood by friends and foes.

Let us now consider Theodore Parker's equipment for this clarifying process. He came from

a race of men whose habit it was to clarify the air. His grandfather had been sergeant in the French and Indian War: he had learned to see clearly the injustice of England's treatment of the colonies; and, when the old bell rang the summons to resist the British on Lexington Green, this John Parker, weak with the illness which later ended his life, drew up his troop of seventy neighbors, ordered them to load with powder and ball, not to fire unless fired upon, but adding those memorable words, "If they mean to have a war, let it begin here." The fowling-piece which he had carried, and a musket which he captured from a grenadier, hung crossed on the wall of his grandson's study,— an abiding inspiration. And "of nothing in his own career was Theodore so proud as of Captain John Parker's deeds and words at the battle of Lexington."

Parker's father was a "quiet, thoughtful, silent man, of strong sense, of great moral worth, reliable, honorable; worked every day and all day; taught his children to speak the truth; always had a book in his hand in the evening." He was an intelligent observer of natural things; he thought for himself, and reached sensible conclusions; was often called upon to arbitrate in disputes, administer estates, and assume the

guardianship of orphans. "He was a religious man, of the grave, earnest sort,— without much emotion; an avowed Unitarian before Unitarianism as a system was preached; a stout Federalist when there were but four besides himself in the whole town."

Theodore's mother was "a handsome woman of slight form, flaxen hair, blue eyes, and a singularly fresh and delicate complexion." She lived much in her imagination and feelings, was of a poetic and romantic temperament, of deep and earnest religion, which came not in the armor of theological creed, but bubbled up from her trusting heart, a well of water springing into eternal life. "She knew God as an omnipresent Father, whose voice was conscience, whose Providence was kindly,— the joyous soul of all things, animating nature and enlightening mind,— filling the world with tides of energy that were as vast as the ocean, and bright as the rivulets." This description of his parents is in the main from Theodore himself,— the just and tender estimate by a noble man of the noble two who gave him birth. And from it we can readily see how he came naturally by his courage for his sensible opinions, and by those subtle intuitions which weighed more with him than the fabric of logic.

Once, when a little boy of four years, he was tempted to strike a spotted tortoise sunning himself in the shallow water of a wayside pool. "But all at once something checked my little arm," he writes, "and a voice within me said, clear and loud, 'It is wrong.' I hastened home and told the tale to my mother, and asked what it was that told me it was wrong. She took me in her arms and said: 'Some men call it conscience, but I prefer to call it the voice of God in the soul of man. If you listen and obey it, then it will speak clearer and clearer, and always guide you right; but, if you turn a deaf ear or disobey, then it will fade out little by little, and leave you all in the dark, and without a guide. Your life depends upon heeding this little voice.' . . . And I am sure that no event in my life has made so deep and lasting an impression on me." I have ventured on the telling of this oft-told incident because it shows so well the strongest influence upon his childhood, and reveals the responsiveness to that influence which grew stronger with the years.

Theodore Parker was a natural little boy, living in a sweet and genuine atmosphere. He was a natural youth, when at the age of twenty-two he opened his private school in Watertown, and taught his boys religion from the texts of their

daily tasks or from the living things that thronged their pathway through the woods. And how natural and wholesome was the spirit in which he sought the high office of the ministry is manifested through the questions which he asked himself on the threshold of Harvard Divinity School: —

1. "Can you seek for what is eternally true, and not be blinded by the opinions of any sect, or of the Christian Church; and can you tell the truth you learn, even when it is unpopular and hated? I answered, 'I can.'

2. "Can you seek the eternal right, and not be blinded by the status of men, ecclesiastical, political, or social; and can you declare that eternal right you discover, applying it to the actual life of men, individual and associated, though it bring you into painful relations of men? Again I swiftly answered, 'I can.'

3. "Can you represent in your life that truth of the intellect and that right of conscience, so as not to disgrace with your character what you preach with your lips? I answered, 'I can try, and I will.'"

How genuine and lofty and searching these questions and answers! and so utterly simple and human! A nature that had lived out under the sky; a temperament which was the amal-

gam of hard sense and religious intuitions; a manly energy that sought truth only in the inward parts; and a courage to bring such truth with its cautery and its balm to the sins and aches of men,— such was the natural equipment with which Parker entered upon his work of naturalizing religion.

Familiar as we are with his mature thought, it is strange to read of his early conservatism. Yet at the outset of his theological course he gave this outline of his opinions: —

"I believe there is one God, who has existed from all eternity, with whom the past, present, and future are alike present; that he is almighty, good, and merciful, will reward the good and punish the wicked, both in this life and the next. This punishment may be eternal. . . . I believe the books of the Old and New Testament to have been written by men inspired by God, for certain purposes; but I do not think of them as inspired at all times. I believe that Christ was the Son of God, conceived and born in a miraculous manner, that he came to preach a better religion by which men may be saved."

It was not long, however, before some of this seemed unreal to him; and one by one the ancient landmarks were removed, until he dwelt at ease in the unfenced field,— which is the

world. He began by doubting the authority of the early Fathers. Then he saw the common-sense position of certain of the German critics, who questioned the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch and the validity of Messianic prophecy. But he accepted these new ideas slowly. We find him making excuses for the barbarous slaughter of the Canaanites: we find him taking up the cudgels in defence of Mosaic authorship as against the critics, and demurring at opinions on New Testament matters which became the accepted truth not many years afterward. In spite of Professor Andrews Norton's private assurance that all "German scholars are raw and inaccurate," he read as many of them as he could lay his hands on; and he lamented that in the library "there was almost none of the new theologic thought of the German masters." He had much time for private study; and to his knowledge of Greek, Latin, and German languages he added Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, Icelandic, Chaldaic, Persian, Coptic, Arabic. Weiss says that "he always seemed to have a language under glass." And Professor Andrew Peabody declared that "the mass of his acquisitions and his facility in their use, in classical learning, history, philosophy, and theology, were almost unprecedented." His years and work at the Divinity

School had forced his conservatism from one outpost to another until finally it was ready to capitulate on any terms he would give it. And on the day of his graduation he wrote: "God has prospered me in my studies; and I am now ready to go forth, but not without dread and fear. What an immense change has taken place in my opinions and feelings upon all the main points of inquiry since I entered this place!"

He had come to believe that no part of the Bible could be called "the Word of God," save in the sense that all truth is God's word. He had come to believe that "the Christian Church is no more divine than the British State or an Austrian's farm." He had studied the historical development of religion, and "found no tribe of men destitute of religion who had attained power of articulate speech." He had come to see that miracles were unnatural, and therefore were to be discredited. But in this process of examination and development three great primal intuitions stood forth as facts of consciousness,— God, the Moral Law, and Immortality. For him the proof for these depends upon no logical process of demonstration, but is given by the instinctive action of human nature itself. Hence these are strictly natural, and constitute "the foundation of religion, which neither the atheist nor the more

pernicious bigot, with their sophisms of denial or affirmation, could move or even shake."

God, the Moral Law, Immortality,— if Theodore Parker could be said to have had a creed, these must be called the great articles of it. But he had no creed,— no theology apart from his religion, no system of truth apart from his experience. What he calls "natural religion" is that body of truth which is normal to and apprehended by the experience of the normal man. But the experience of the normal man must include that man's intuitions as well as his sensations. Here he breaks with the German naturalism, whose "theology, philosophy, and worship are of the senses, and of the senses alone." That system does not seem true to him, because it leaves out of account or discredits that which to him is fundamentally real,— the immediate consciousness of the Deity. He has been accused of Pantheism, but the accusation has come from the lack of distinction between what is in a subject and the subject itself. Light is in the air, but light is not the air. God is in nature and man, but nature and man are not God. Parker's great truth was this of Divine Immanence. "The influence of God in nature," he writes, "in its mechanical, vital, or instinctive action, is beautiful. It admonishes while it delights us. It is our

silent counsellor, our sovereign aid. But the inspiration of God in man — when faithfully obeyed — is nobler and far more beautiful. It is not the passive elegance of unconscious things which we see resulting from man's voluntary obedience. That might well charm us in nature: in man we look for more. A single good man, at one with God, makes the morning and evening sun seem little and very low. It is a higher mode of the divine power that appears in him, self-conscious and self-restrained."

He has been accused of Transcendentalism; yet, while he had large sympathy with the Transcendental movement, and numbered among his most intimate friends many of that famous group, he is more definite than they, and was able to keep well on this side of the vagaries of their thinking. Dr. Peabody wrote of him, "On the most fundamental of all religious truths,— that of the personality of God, with the correlative truth, the reality of the communion of the human spirit with him in prayer,— he seems never to have entertained a doubt; while in this entire region of thought they were utterly befogged and adrift, though some of them ultimately came out into clearer light, and upon solid ground." It is true that the teaching fascinated him, because it promised so much more than the barren and limited

results of Naturalism. He lived within a mile of Brook Farm; but he never joined in that enterprise, though he was a frequent visitor. That is typical of his attitude toward Transcendentalism as a whole. His passion for statistics, his sense for practical utility, his habit of induction from close observations, restrained him from that nebulous upper-world. He saw that "Transcendentalism has a work to do, to show that physics, politics, ethics, religion, rest on facts of necessity, and have their witness and confirmation in facts of observation." He was at one with the movement so long as it kept to that legitimate work; but the parting of their ways was marked by the sign-board: "This way to Guesses. This way to Facts."

Parker's theology was the description of his experience. "After preaching a few months in various places," he declares, "I determined to preach nothing as religion which I had not experienced inwardly and made my own,— knowing it by heart." And Chadwick writes of him, "It was not his philosophy or theology, it was his religion, the product of his organization, his temperament, and his experience, that convinced men as could no argument, and made them evangelists of the faith they had received." "You and I," cries Parker, "are not born in the dotage and

decay of the world. Wherever a heart beats with love, where Faith and Reason utter their oracles, there also is God, as formerly in the hearts of seers and prophets. Neither Gerizim nor Jerusalem, nor the soil that Jesus blessed, is so holy as the good man's heart; nothing so full of God. The clear sky bends over each man, little or great; let him uncover his head, there is nothing between him and infinite space. So the ocean of God encircles all men; uncover the soul of its sensuality, selfishness, sin; there is nothing between it and God, who flows into man, as light into air. Certain as the open eye drinks in the light, do the pure in heart see God, and he that lives truly feels him as a presence not to be put by. This is a doctrine of experience. There are hours when the hand of destiny seems heavy upon us; when the thought of time misspent, the pang of affection misplaced or unrequited, the experience of man's worst nature and the sense of our own degradation, come over us. In the outward and the inward trials, we know not which way to turn. The heart faints and is ready to perish. Then in the deep silence of the soul, when the man turns inward to God, light, comfort, peace, draw on him. His troubles,— they are the dewdrop on his sandal. His enmities or jealousies, hopes, fears, honors, disgraces, all the undeserved mis-

haps of life, are lost to the view; diminished, and then hid in the mists of the valley he has left behind and below him. Resolution comes over him with its vigorous wing; Truth is clear as noon; the soul in faith rushes to its God. The mystery is at an end. . . . Conscience is still God-with-us. Prayer is deep as ever of old. Reason as true; Religion as blest. Faith still remains the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Love is yet mighty to cast out fear. The substance of the Infinite is not yet exhausted, nor the well of Life drunk dry. The Father is near us as ever, else Reason were a traitor, Morality a hollow form, Religion a mockery, and Love a hideous lie." In such an immediate experience, Leibnitz' sneer that "God has to wind up his watch from time to time, because he could not see ahead far enough to establish perpetual motion," is utterly out of place. God himself *is* the perpetual motion in all phenomena and thought. Hence miracles are unnecessary when all life is a continual miracle. Inspiration cannot be restricted to a land, or a century, or a group of men, when life itself is the perpetual inspiration of God. There is no room for a supernature in a nature which is itself so vast.

Contrast this with the traditional theology which thinks of God as apart from the world; re-

vealing himself by dictational inspiration through special men for a special purpose; limiting truth to such revelations; holding men eternally responsible for obedience to those revelations; to rescue them from the desperate consequences of their disobedience, coming among them himself, and attesting his presence and authority by miraculous signs and wonders; arbitrarily choosing a minority of the human race as worthy to receive such benefits, giving them supernatural power to make their calling and election sure; thereby saving them into a heaven to which they have no other right, for whose delights they have elsewise no liking. Parker made that terrific contrast; and the whole system seemed to him so unreal, so mechanical, so hostile, to the experience of life as he knew it, that he felt that religion thus taught was "a mockery, morality a hollow form, and love a hideous lie."

In the Letter to his Parishioners from Santa Cruz he writes: "I have preached against the errors of this ecclesiastical theology more than upon any other form of wrong, for they are the most fatal mischiefs of the land. . . . It has grieved me tenderly to see all Christendom making the Bible its fetich, and so losing the priceless value of that free religious spirit which, communing at first hand with God, wrote its grand

pages or poured out its magnificent beatitudes. . . . So I have preached against the fundamental errors of this well-compacted theological scheme, showing the consequences which follow thence. But I have never forgotten the great truths this theology contains, invaluable to the intellect, the heart, and the soul. I have tried to preserve them all, with each good institution which the Church, floating over the ruins of the elder world, has borne across the deluge, and set down for us where the dove of peace has found rest for the sole of her foot, and gathered her olive-branch to show that those devouring waters are dried up from the face of the earth. To me the name of Christianity is most exceeding dear, significant of so great a man, and of such natural emotions, ideas, and actions as are of priceless value to mankind. I have not sat in the seat of the scornful. I have taken exquisite delight in the grand words of the Bible, which to me are more dear when I regard them not as the miracles of God, but as the work of earnest men, who did their uttermost with holy heart. I love to read the lessons of that human Hebrew peasant, who summed up the prophets and the law in one word of *love*, and set forth men's daily duties in such true and simple speech. My preaching has been positive much more than negative; controversial

only to create. I have tried to set forth the truths of natural religion, gathered from the world of matter and of spirit. I rely on these great ideas as the chief means for exciting the religious feelings, and promoting religious deeds. I have destroyed only what seemed pernicious, and that I might build a better structure in its place."

Parker's whole controversy with existing theology was against its unreality and deadness. His whole effort was to make theology real and alive. Before the judgment-seat of these twin censors, Reality and Life, he ruthlessly haled every statement, opinion, act, observance, claim. By their decree must the prisoner stand or fall. Though clad in the bright livery of an angel, if these condemned, the culprit was shorn of its lustrous robes and driven from before men. Though clad in homespun, if by these upheld, it was clothed in light as with a garment and set in the place of kings. Dr. Cyrus Bartol called him "the sheriff of ideas, the executor of God's law, the preacher of righteousness." Sheriff he was, this man who made every vagrant idea on the street corner give a good account of itself and forced every idle fancy into the service of mankind. "Having eternal principles in charge, he used the timely opportunity to set them in gear." "Executor of God's law" he was when he insisted upon the

humanity of even a runaway black man, and as chairman of the Vigilance Committee he personally saw that such justice as was possible was secured to that humanity. "Executor of God's law" he was, this man whose sermon after sermon thundered denunciation of public wrongs and in the name of the eternal right demanded their betterment. And "preacher of righteousness" he surely was,— a righteousness which exceeded the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees of his day because it was character rather than orthodoxy, life rather than belief, the indwelling God shining clear and irrefutable through every pore of human nature.

What manner of man was he who thus stood like a great rock in a weary land,— dividing the prevailing winds of doctrine and breaking their force that storm-swept souls might find a shelter in his lee?

Men warned others not even to look upon his face, lest the sight (like that of the Gorgon of old) should turn them into stone. But others said, "To be in his society was to be impelled in the direction of all nobleness." This strong man, who feared neither the wrath of God nor of men, but dreaded lest he be untrue to either, had the gentleness of a woman. His great heart of sympathy, which led him to demand humanness of

religion, made him unspeakably tender to the sorrows and troubles of men. From far-off Indiana came a letter from a Quaker whom he had never seen. "Dear Theodore,— We are just returned from the funeral of our child, and our hearts turn first to thee for sympathy." To countless souls he was as a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. He had toys and pet names for the children; and "when he went lecturing there were never so many books stuffed in his grip-sack to be read on the train but that a nook was found for a little bag of candy whereby fretful children were beguiled, while tired mothers got their sweetness in the sympathy of the unknown friend pleading with them to suffer the little children to come unto him." All of this, and the rest, of which time would fail me to speak, was the efflorescence of his profoundly religious and devotional life. Prayer was to him his vital breath. It came naturally and easily from a heart always ready, always overflowing. It meant so much to him that he prayed to God as our "Father and Mother." Miss Alcott speaks of the prayer in the first public service of his which she ever attended. "It was unlike any prayer I had ever heard,— not cold and formal, as if uttered from a sense of duty; not a display of eloquence, nor an impious directing of Deity in his duties toward humanity.

It was a quiet talk with God, as if long intercourse and much love had made it natural and easy for the son to seek the Father — confessing faults, asking help, and submitting all things to the All-wise and tender — as freely as children bring their little sorrows, hopes, and fears to their mother's knee."

It was "natural": that was the key-note of Theodore Parker's life and work. With all the wealth of his marvellous learning, he was not an originator. His knowledge tended to fortify and explain his own inner life rather than to furnish material for an enduring system of philosophy. Parker's great service was to furnish a life in which religion was fervidly dominant and vitally real. He was a man who thought, indeed; but, more than that, he was a man who lived. His example was almost as powerful as his word to render religion natural. His work was sorely needed at that time. Such work will be sorely needed again. But just in proportion as a man is so vividly necessary to his own day must his greatest worth be limited to that day. The brightness of his career is a lastingly luminous spot; but, after all, it is a spot, not a universal illumination. This does not mean that we of this later time cannot read his words with profit, and from them receive new impetus

toward everything that is highest and best. We can do so: men will always do so — in some degree. The record of his life will strengthen the purpose and fitness of other men to repeat his work when the need again appears; but his work was not such as to make forever impossible the appearance of that new need. Some day the exigencies of the religious life will demand that some one else shall stand up and say, "The old is done away: all things are become new." But the prophet who in that day shall be anointed to his mighty task will find his work cheerier, his heart braver, his spirit kept more sweet, because yesterday Theodore Parker lived so well, battled so strongly, and conquered so gloriously for the humanizing of religion.

# XI

## Phillips Brooks and the Unity of the Spirit

# PHILLIPS BROOKS AND THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT.

The profound feeling in regard to the character and unique influence of Phillips Brooks has found expression in a great variety of public utterances. The accounts and descriptions of his life and work are so admirable and abundant, and derived from such a variety of sources, that I may confine myself to-day to a single aspect of his career. I shall not attempt even the merest outline of a biographical review. I shall not undertake to analyze his character or thought. He was, undoubtedly, the greatest American preacher of his generation. Beecher and Moody may have aroused more immediate popular interest; but the great literature that has grown up about Phillips Brooks, the unprecedented circulation of his printed sermons, as well as the immediate response of the thronging congregations that hung upon his words, give ample testimony to his wide-spread influence and fame. The secret of his power was in his vital sympathy, his large humanity. We do not think of him to-day as a theologian or as a church dignitary. We think of him as the embodiment of all that

is lofty in human character. As in physical stature he overlooked us all, so his moral and spiritual proportions were exceptional. His commanding figure was the fit symbol of a generous and magnanimous nature. His preaching was not controversial or critical. He did not deny or attack. He rarely fell into doctrinal discussions. He seldom tried to argue. He cheered and persuaded his hearers, and never tried to threaten or humiliate them. He had an overmastering consciousness of the love of God and a deep compassion for his fellow-men. To quicken in their hearts his sense of the divine love, to so quicken it that it should be a strength in sorrow and in joy, a constructive energy building up Christian character, a dynamic impelling to public-spirited activity, that was "the Father's business in which he had a partnership."

Because he set forth no dogmatic formulas, men have supposed, and often said, that he was not a theologian. But I think it can be justly replied that no man was ever a great preacher without having great convictions. "No preaching"—we read in the "Lectures on Preaching"—"ever had any strong power that was not the preaching of doctrine." He did not indeed present a special system of doctrine or preach Christianity in philosophic form. He was not

so much interested in the discovery of truth as in the application of truth. Apart from his inheritances and the pressure of his immediate environment, the strongest professional influence that he acknowledged was that of Frederick Denison Maurice; and Maurice was theologically "an impersonated fog." Dr. Donald has said that the theology of Phillips Brooks was that of Horace Bushnell, and that statement is readily verifiable. With Bushnell he represented the transitional period in the theological movement of the last half of the nineteenth century. He was not an innovator. He accepted certain interpretations of the universe which appealed to his temperament, and he concerned himself in making these teachings fruitful and helpful in daily life. He does not appear to have had more than a languid interest in the investigations into the authenticity and authorship of the Biblical books. Philosophical speculations about the relation of the natural and supernatural passed him by. His mental make-up did not lead him to become interested in these themes. Yet he was an indefatigable student, widely read, much travelled. He absorbed stores of knowledge from his surroundings. He drew strength from nature, history, poetry, and human experience, and with indescribable skill worked over all he gath-

ered into material for sermons. Illumined by original insight, constructed with utmost industry and literary facility, his sermons are still an exhilarating tonic to an age wearied with many perplexing questionings and in peril of overwhelming materialism. He was a prophet of the richness of things both seen and unseen. He was not narrowed, on the one hand, by any bondage to antiquity, or, on the other hand, by the passion for novelty, which excludes men from access to the treasures of the past. He was not spoiled by what he called "the silly side of ministerial popularity" or frightened by any theological or ecclesiastical terrorism. He had no need to assert his right to be liberal or to declare his independence. He simply took these things for granted, and went on his way rejoicing. He did not try to prove what he clearly saw; but, like his Master, he held up the light, that it might show to his fellow-men the way to the more abundant life.

He liked to discover the deeper significance of ancient and apparently obsolete teachings, and to reveal the symbolic and poetic meanings of old dogmas which in their literal form did not appeal to him. What has been called his liberalism often consisted in putting new meanings into old forms. He broadened slowly from precedent to precedent. He fulfilled Goethe's saying: "He

who wishes to have a useful influence on his time should insult nothing. Let him not trouble himself about what is absurd: let him concentrate his energy on this,— the bringing to light of good things. He is bound not to overthrow, but to build up." Phillips Brooks thus kept himself with entire integrity in the currents of the conservative liberalism of a select communion, which he devotedly loved and happily served; but all the time he felt himself in vital sympathy with historic Christianity, with "the glorious company of the apostles and the goodly fellowship of the prophets and the Holy Church throughout all the world."

I do not think that it can be truly said that Phillips Brooks added anything of permanent value to the substance of systematic divinity. Save by high example of great duties simply done, he did not help to solve the problem of church government in a democracy. By the might of consecrated manhood and by pure healthy-mindedness, he lifted all the standards of ministerial service; but he added nothing important to scholarship. The sober judgment of the new generation will turn aside from many of his mystical conclusions; but the spirit in which he wrought and the impulse of his manly and noble personality will remain as abiding

influences and blessings. He was the bearer of good tidings, and thousands of men think better of themselves and more of their God because he lived and spoke. His influence was like a change of climate, "like the spring softness after the harshness of a winter of austere theology."

If, then, I am right in thinking that Phillips Brooks made no direct contribution to the science of theology and that the form of church administration which he upheld and adorned is really foreign to the spirit of a democracy, wherein shall we find his right to stand among the pioneers of religious liberty? What was his permanent contribution to the religious life of America? The one message which rings through all the varied harmony of his public speech, and which found verification in his own dealings with his fellow-men, is the testimony to the "Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." His words were a thrilling revelation of the present potency of a living God. He taught that men might have a more abundant life, and his very style caught vitality from his theme. The splendid bearing, the tremendous vehemence of speech, the absorbed consciousness of the truth he was so eager to utter, and the equal unconsciousness of self, all made him the herald of the larger life. There was contagious joyousness in

his preaching and abounding optimism in his thought, so that his sermons ring with the refrain of his own song: "Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light." He recognized that the source of all enlightenment and inspiration is one and the same, and that no human soul is without connection with the divine fountain. Amid the obvious diversities of forms and opinions which exist among Christians it was given him to discern the underlying faith that all hold in common. Under the loud jangle of theological disputation, his ear caught the swelling strain of the one religion. He dared to believe that the faiths of the heart will, in the long run, be more than a match for the pride of dogma and the distractions of dispute.

This universal spirit in his thought found expression very early in his career. Professor Allen, in his monumental biography, feels that the most remarkable year of his life was the second year at the Theological School at Alexandria. He says: "In no other year did he receive so much from the world, from books, from life, and from himself. In no other year did he leave so marvellous a record of his genius. He had come to the full possession of himself in the greatness of his power." Now whoever reads the outpourings of his soul in that year of study

cannot fail to be impressed with the fact that he had already transcended sectarian distinctions. The records in his journal, the writing out of the thoughts that burned within him, have all the ethical sensibility, the spiritual imagination, the power of expression, which characterized his maturer years; but, above all else, they have what I have called a universal quality. No one could tell whether these writings came from an Episcopalian, a Unitarian, or a Friend, or even whether they were of Christian or Hebrew origin. Yet everything is in them that made his final thought most helpful and profound. They are the translation of his own thought and spiritual experience into terms of universal application.

What a rebuke there is for all bigotry and narrowness in the words, "Let us reverence our neighbor's way of finding truth," or, "Until we have learned the universal language of sympathy, how may we hope to speak so that all may hear us?" He carried that spirit through all his hurried, lonely life. In every man and every religious movement he found "seeds of Christ" which under no conceivable circumstance could lose the possibility of germination. Phillips Brooks held to the faith of his own Church, and yet he neither believed, nor wished men to think that he believed, that his Church was the only

manifestation of the life of Christ on earth. How clearly I recall my own conversations with him when in that turmoil of spirit which comes to many a young man as he tries to choose his life's career! In all my talks with him about the possibility of my becoming a minister, he never once suggested that I could be anything but a minister of the Church into which I was born; and he had just as much sympathy with me in my hopes and purposes as if I had been a communicant of his Church. How he gloried in the rectitude and fortitude of his Puritan forefathers! How he rejoiced in the free spirit of his Unitarian neighbors and friends! How his heart was moved by the appeals of Moody or the philanthropy of the Salvation Army! No movement of the human spirit toward God was without his sympathy. He loved his own, but he loved also those of other names, for they were all the children of one God; and outside of all the boundaries of the churches, beyond the confines of Christianity itself, his great spirit roamed, "to welcome the beginnings of day in the twilight of heathenism." Did he not unconsciously describe himself when he said of James Freeman Clarke: "He belonged to the whole Church of Christ. Through him his Master spoke to all who had ears to hear. It is a beautiful, a solemn moment

when the city, the church, the world, gathers up the completeness of a finished life like his, and thanks God for it, and places it in the shrine of memory, a power and a revelation thenceforth so long as the city and church and world shall last"? Or hear what Bishop Lawrence said of him in the noble address which is, on the whole, the most satisfying short account of his great predecessor's thought and service: "He was claimed, and by right, as the spiritual guide of people of all churches and of no church. His message and influence passed over all denominational boundaries. No one church can claim him as exclusively hers. He belonged to the Christian world of the nineteenth century."

In this proclamation of what he would call "the universal Christ," I repeat, is to be found the enduring influence of Phillips Brooks. In a measure it was the reaffirmation of Channing's doctrine of the dignity of human nature, or of Emerson's gospel of the immanence of Deity; but it was these teachings expressed in the phrases of Christian piety. "The essence of Christian faith," he said, "is not the inspiration of the Bible, not the election of certain souls or the perdition of other souls, not the length of man's punishment, not the doctrine of the Trinity, but simply this,— the testimony of the divine in man to

the divine in man, that lifts up the man and says, 'For me to be brutal is unmanly, to be divine is to be my true self.'" Read again the marvellous sermon on "The Light of the World," which, with the persuasiveness which rarely illustrates Cicero's definition of true eloquence as of the nature of virtue, reaffirms the essential teaching of Channing. "In so far," he declared, "as man is not God's, he is not truly man. Whatever he does in his true human nature, undistorted, unperverted, is divinely done." Or read again the sermon on "The Eternal Humanity," wherein is set forth "the nativeness of righteousness in man": "Redemption is the perfection of humanity on its own human lines. Eternal life is the deepening of the present life, and not merely its substitute by another life." What clear and luminous reflection of Emerson is in these words: "All this change from the arbitrary to the essential in religion has its connection with the other habits of our nature, with its love of physical science and its study of nature and her laws. . . . It chooses to look at God, not as a fitful Omnipotence, choosing each hour's colors by each hour's whims; but as essential law, in whom all things move by moral necessities, which he cannot change unless he changes himself and is no longer God"!

The lectures on Tolerance contain the clearest and most ample statement of Phillips Brooks's convictions on these themes, though the spirit in which the lectures were written can be traced throughout all his printed words. "That little book," said his biographer, Professor Allen, "is a very personal one; for he was vindicating his own position, his mental freedom, his superiority to narrow sectarian lines, his wide sympathies, his own tolerance for all sincere and earnest thought. He was guarding himself against being travestied and misdescribed, either by bigotry, on the one hand, or what is called 'free thought,' on the other. His tone is at times tender and pathetic. He was gentle and kind; for he had adversaries to conciliate, if possible. He knew that his position was a difficult one to maintain; but he was determined to make it clear, and to enforce and recommend it by the fascination of his eloquence and his wide observation and experience of life. He took for his text, if we may call it so, a passage from the writings of Maurice, which he admits sounds like a paradox, but will come to be an axiom,—'It is the natural feeling of all that charity is founded upon the uncertainty of truth. I believe that it is founded on the certainty of truth.'"

Tolerance, that is, is the result of a belief, not

of absence of belief. It is not shallowness, but depth of conviction, that produces the charitable temper. True fellowship must recognize the value of antagonisms, and seek the unity that lies beneath and not above the puzzling questions of spiritual experience. The advice to give a bigot that you want to make liberal is not, "Hold your special form of faith loosely and make less of it," but "Hold your special form of faith more deeply and make more of it." If we can all learn to hold our different forms of faith largely enough and vitally enough, we shall find that they are not walls to separate us from one another, but rather avenues through which we may enter into sympathy and comradeship.

How impossible it was for any man to isolate himself from the abundant sympathy and helpfulness of this magnanimous nature! He habitually emphasized the virtues of his neighbors. He had a generous confidence in another man's motives and purposes, and a scrupulous care for the reputation of every comrade. While his mind was thus given to hospitality, there was nothing weakly amiable in him. He was no mush of concession. His denominational backbone was straight and strong. He was perfectly ready for a good intellectual fight. He did not propose, for the sake of what is expedient, to

give up what is right. He made the necessary distinction between the inevitable and wholesome differences of self-reliant men and the perennial disposition to censoriousness. He recognized that there are conflicts of opinion which are signs of mental activity and moral integrity. He did not undervalue them; but, when division was seen to spring from prejudice or pride or envy, when it resulted in a resolution to deprive others of the freedom which all should enjoy, then he burst out in righteous indignation. He knew well enough that thorough and painstaking investigation will often lead honest minds to dissimilar conclusions. But at the same time he knew how to denounce divisions arising out of contentions. He deplored, not the necessarily diverse aspects of Christian truth, but the division of Christian energy of which the enemies of public righteousness everywhere take advantage. He deplored the waste of Christian force, not the many-sidedness of Christian conviction.

Tolerant to the uttermost as he was, I venture to say that the hardest thing for him to tolerate was the growth of the sacerdotal tendencies in his own communion. It is a curiosity of ecclesiastical nomenclature that what in these new days is self-called "catholicity" appears to be identical

with intolerance. He is supposed to be the best "Catholic" and the most loyal "Churchman" who turns his back most contemptuously on his Christian brethren who are not of the Anglican persuasion. Phillips Brooks committed the crime, unpardonable in the eyes of the new Pharisaism, of regarding his fellow Christians of other allegiances as no less honest, no less precious in the sight of God, than Episcopalians. He did not have to apologize for the horribly democratic saying, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." To quote Dean Farrar, "Wherever he saw the fruits of the spirit, he was convinced of the presence of the spirit; and no loud assertion made him believe that the spirit was present in factions which yield only the fruits of bitterness and are chiefly conspicuous for the broad phylacteries of uncharitable arrogance." When the attempt was made to change the name of the Protestant Episcopal Church and call it the Church of America, how Brooks flamed out in scornful indignation! He was a Protestant Episcopalian, with the emphasis on the Protestant. He had no patience with those who depreciated the heroes of the Reformation. The superb lecture on Luther gave no comfort to the extreme Catholic party. He did not claim any particular

sanctity for Episcopacy. He believed in the historic Episcopate because he thought it a good form of church government, justified by its utility. The doctrine of the apostolic succession was, he said, "a doctrine of magic, not a doctrine of religion." It is a great temptation to me to quote some of the saucy things he said about the pompous ways and stupid decorum of bishops. He was always poking fun at ecclesiastical millinery and clerical pretensions. He exploded many a gas-bag with a pointed jest. But to speak of these things now might misrepresent the seriousness of Phillips Brooks's message and the large charity of his heart.

Our understanding of Phillips Brooks's spirit will, however, be incomplete if we fail to recognize his attitude toward what is called Orthodoxy. Dr. Crothers, who now most completely represents in our community the genuine catholicity which Brooks exemplified, has recently called attention to the peril of conventionalizing our heroes. It is the fate of great men to be misunderstood in proportion as they are admired, and the result of idealizing is often the elimination of some very essential characteristics. We must not forget that to Phillips Brooks's contempt for priestcraft was joined a very thorough-going distrust of any orthodoxy whatsoever. The non-

conformist conscience was his New England birthright, and it was always strong in him. Did it not find expression when he said, "We find that the lower orders of the Church's workers, the mere runners of her machinery, have always been strictly and scrupulously orthodox, while all the Church's noblest servants, they who have opened to her new heavens of vision and new domains of work — Paul, Origen, Tertullian, Abelard, Luther, Milton, Coleridge, Maurice, Swedenborg, Martineau — have been persecuted for being what they truly were, unorthodox"? In such a heterodox saying as that — oft repeated in different forms — or in the genuinely iconoclastic utterances of the essay on Orthodoxy may be found ample justification for the feeling among the more conservative members of his own denomination that he was essentially a heretic. "Orthodoxy in the Church," he said, "is very much what prejudice is in the single mind. It is the premature conceit of certainty. It is the treatment of the imperfect as if it were perfect." "We cannot but believe," he said again, "that in the future the whole conception of orthodoxy is destined to grow less and less prominent. Less and less will men ask of any opinion, 'Is it orthodox?' More and more will they ask, 'Is it true?' . . . Is not the sum of the whole matter

this,— that orthodoxy, as a principle of action or a standard of belief, is obsolete and dead? It is not that the substance of orthodoxy has been altered, but that the very principle of orthodoxy has been essentially disowned. It is not conceivable that any council, however ecumenically constituted, should so pronounce on truth that its decrees should have any weight with thinking men save what might seem legitimately to belong to the character and wisdom of the persons who composed the council. Personal judgment is on the throne, and will remain there,— personal judgment, enlightened by all the wisdom, past and present, which it can summon to its aid, but forming finally its own conclusions, and standing by them in the sight of God, whether it stands in a great company or stands alone." That is the tone of a radical reformer. Theodore Parker would not have said it more drastically. No wonder that men who believed that their church really had a "deposit" of final truth looked upon the man who was capable of making such utterances as a dangerous person.

I cannot discover that Phillips Brooks found any satisfaction in the appeals for Christian union which are commonly urged in this generation, whether from the Vatican or from Lambeth Palace. All these appeals assume that the dissen-

sions of Christendom are to be healed by theological sticking plasters. Phillips Brooks knew that true Christian fellowship cannot be secured on the basis of intellectual agreements. The old way was to force men into Christian federation by authority. Phillips Brooks would have us try the method of complete freedom of thought and expression, and seek the brotherhood of mutual service. He knew that true unity is not a matter of organization or government or doctrine, ritual, phrase, or name. Instead of lamenting the differences among men, he thanked God for the variety and fulness of human thought and life. He did not look for uniformity, for uniformity is found only in things that are dead. It is because men have life that they differ. The seeds of wide differences in adult life appear in the nursery of every home. Why should they not appear and be welcome in the family of God? The variety of men's occupations is essential to civilization. The diversity of their opinions,—does not each contain some one aspect of that many-sided truth which as yet is too vast for any one individual or group to grasp? All society is made up of co-operating diversities; and, the more perfect the society, the more widely those who compose it vary in the direction of their gifts and faculties and accomplishments. Limit us to

men of the same intentions and thoughts, and we become simply repetitions of one type. Give us free access to each new manifestation of God in one another's consciousness, and we partake of the inexhaustible riches of the divine nature. Phillips Brooks dared to believe the word of the apostle: "There are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit; diversities of administration, but the same Lord; diversities of operation, but it is the same God that worketh all in all, and his own manifestation of the spirit is given to each for the profit of all, that by the effectual working in the measure of each part the whole may be made perfect."

Let, then, the sects do their work, and have God's blessing in doing it. No one wants churches shorn of individuality. Wise men do not war against diversities: they rather try to enter into sympathetic understanding of the special truth each household of faith has inherited or achieved. Phillips Brooks ventured to hope that, with little or no diminution of the present multiplicity of sects, we may come into an ever-larger sympathy, each cultivating his own little garden with loving and assiduous care, but each rejoicing in the others' flowers and fruit, not always harping on their barrenness and weeds; loyal to our own

traditions, reverent of the traditions and usages that our neighbors cherish.

Starr King once used an analogy that aptly illustrates the teaching of Phillips Brooks. He likened the diversities of the religious world to the stops of an organ. The church is one, like the organ: it is diverse and broken, like the ranges of its pipes. The sects are the stops. The value of each stop is that it breathes out and modulates, with more or less compass, a certain pervading quality of tone. Some stops cannot be used together without painful discord; but, if more stops are added, they may broaden and enrich the harmony. Some stops are narrow in their range or give no sweeping, rounded tone; some, like the Methodist stop, waken, when it is drawn, the emotional life; some, like the Calvinistic, shake the air with the mutterings of judgment and the vibrations of the law. One might, however, readily be led away by this analogy. Of course, no one would assert that the hostile dogmas of different sects are necessary to the completeness and unity of Christian truth. A dozen intellectual contradictions cannot combine into catholic verity. But the sentiments which different churches stand for and work out, though they may be connected with doctrines that are to many un-

congenial, are essential to the fulness of religious truth. Churches and sects exist by and for the sentiments they appeal to and feed.

While, then, Phillips Brooks rejected almost contemptuously the mechanical schemes of church union that are noisily proclaimed, he did, in the chaos of disunited independent sects which now make up the Protestant fellowship, discern the possibility of a genuine unity. A Protestant Christian in these days, however sympathetic his own temper, is practically shut up within the fold of a sect, which, if liberal, is excluded by all the rest, and which, if illiberal, excludes all others. Phillips Brooks did not try to say, "Lo here, lo there, the Church"; but he did declare the essential characteristics of the Holy Catholic Church, to which he daily confessed his allegiance. His quadrilateral was not that of Lambeth; but it was practically the quadrilateral of principles set forth by a more logical and constructive mind than his own, that of Dr. Frederic Henry Hedge. First, a root in the past, a sense of continuity, a pledge of perpetuity. A catholic church must have — that is its conservative side — some abiding rock upon which to build its faith, some distinct starting-point for its spiritual life and influence. Second, such a church must invite variety and practise freedom.

It must be plastic enough in doctrine and discipline to allow of change and growth. It must not assume the infallibility that breeds exclusiveness, or seek to confine Christianity forever to special formulas. Christianity, though bound to a common ideal and certain unchanging facts of experience, is not a fixture, but a movement, not a divinely established system of doctrines and institutions, but a flowing administration of the spirit in such forms and aspects as each successive generation requires. Third, the true Catholic Church must welcome and emphasize that spirit which we best define under the term "mysticism," that element in religion which lays hold of unseen and eternal realities, and enters into communion with a spiritual world. It is the mystic element in Christianity, represented by Thomas à Kempis and Tauler and the Quakers and Emerson and Brooks himself and all the poets, which keeps the heavens open and the soul awake and life divine. And, fourth, the Holy Catholic Church requires some external organization. Such organization must be spontaneous, and never too rigid; but a Church without such corporate organization and without symbols is an impossibility. The religious sentiment, to be sure, is eternal; but, if allowed to remain unfixed and unexpressed, it may become an evil rather

than a good. It preserves its identity by means of outward symbols. It craves stated expression and common rights. It requires some corporate organism for its preservation. The spirit seeks some letter in which to utter itself. Stability, freedom, idealism, organization,— these are the cardinal constituents of the Church Universal, to which we must add, as the complement and ground of all, the charity which binds and pervades and harmonizes, the love which is the supreme grace of the Christian dispensation. This is an entrancing vision to those of us who are involved in the perplexities and bickerings and petty jealousies of modern Protestantism.

The inclusiveness of this vision found ideal representation in the personality of Bishop Brooks. His character, like his thought, was rich in many varied qualities. As he said of Maurice, he was at once moralist and mystic. Like all men of great influence, he was an idealist and optimist and at the same time a judicious, successful man of business, whose feet were firmly planted on mother earth. There was the quick poetic sensibility allied with the power to centre the whole attention on the simplest details. Prophetic gifts were united in him with great executive power. There was the deep love of all humanity and the capacity to make each indi-

vidual his friend. Bubbling over with fun, he still had deep reserves; always courteous and cordial, but of rare personal reticence. It was not that he possessed any one gift in excess, but that he held together so many different gifts in perfect harmony. The things which are so often separated in other men's lives were wedded in him. Therein is found the largeness of his personality. This unity of spirit that he taught and lived was reflected, too, in the willing discipleship he commanded. Men of all sects and parties united in praising, not opinions and not theologies, but consecrated manhood. More and more, as men ponder on his life and teaching, they realize that the things that divide them into hostile sects are transient and insignificant beside the deep faiths of the heart that unite them. More and more they come to see that our theological systems are but broken lights of the eternal, that the universal elements in religion are the only permanent elements, and that the river of spiritual truth cannot be made to flow in any one regular and undeviating channel. With all neighborly associations, and the common experiences of joy and sorrow, and the common admiration of things true and lovely and of good report, bringing men together, it will be hard indeed if matters of fallible opinion can forever keep them

apart. More and more intelligent people weary of bigoted partisanship. They begin to appreciate how much good there is in schools of thought or forms of worship alien from their own. Men do not divide into factions over the Beatitudes; they do not contend about the Golden Rule; they do not plant their sectarianism on the Lord's Prayer, or on that lofty teaching, "God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth"; they do not split into warring parties over the great conception of God the Universal Father, and all men brothers. These are the conceptions which, so far from dividing men, make men ashamed of division. Let us agree to live in these deep, central, vital matters about which there can be no contention. In the hour of noble resolve or high aspiration who now thinks of the dividing lines of doctrine? Theological divisions are no longer incompatible with brotherly love and cordial fellowship. If we remember the blessing on the peacemakers, if we feel that preaching wrathfully or bitterly poisons even truth itself, that our satisfaction may be the Pharisee's pride, and the objects of our enmity may enjoy the Samaritan's blessing, then, surely, the seeming difficulty of diversity in unity and unity in diversity will cease to oppress us.

Sectarianism and bigotry have so long held

sway that they will die hard. You and I shall not live to see their fall, but we may already see flying here and there on the citadels of dogmatism the white flags of truce and amity. The new church that the prophetic vision of Channing and Emerson and Brooks foresaw and foretold is already potent in the minds and hearts of the leaders of the Christian host. Its name is not yet revealed. Its organization awaits the touch of the master hand, but its spirit and aspiration are here. Already it is true that the man who shuts himself up in the close communion of a single sect, no matter how noisily he may proclaim that he alone belongs to the Church, is yet the real schismatic. His is the real isolation. However large and strong his special sect, he has cut himself off from the greater company of Christians, the host of those who are bound together not by external organization, but by spiritual affinity and law. The birthright church of all true Christian men will yet achieve its winsome authority. It is founded on the rock of man's spiritual nature. Its fellowship is the brotherhood of high ideals and reasonable service. Its common life is in the native and irrepressible tendency of humanity to reverence and worship. Its common thought is in the confidence that underneath are the everlasting arms. This universal religious conscious-

ness will yet unite the hearts of bewildered and wearied humanity in the humility of common prayer and praise and in glad obedience to the law of liberty. It will move men to public-spirited activity and deeds of benevolence and justice. It will create its prophets and preachers, burning with enthusiasm for truth, its saints of tender devotion and patient service, its reformers waking men from dead forms to new faith and righteousness. It will establish the true Church Catholic, the church not of Rome, not of England, not of America, but the Church of the living God.

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